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SHAKESPEARE'S

MACBETH

Dr. S. K. Banerji

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SHAKESPEARE

MACBETH

WITH

Introduction, Paraphrase, Notes, Explanations, Questions and Answers

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INTRODUCTION TO SHAKESPEARE

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General Introduction

History of the Elizabethan Drama

The story of the birth and early development of English drama is rather complicated, if traced in all its details. But the various stages and transitions through which it passed can be clearly followed. Before the Norman conquest, there is no drama in English literature. It should be remembered that the bulk of Old English writings is overshadowed by the influence of Latin Christianity. The Latin Church has always feared the powerful appeal that drama will make to the eye and ear—an appeal to the senses being a direct challenge to its spiritual authority. Since the decadence of the pagan drama of Rome, the Church has done nothing to encourage the stage. But strangely enough the Mass in Latin Christianity is in reality a sacred drama—and contained at any rate dramatic possibilities. Thus, under the shadow of the Church the drama is to rise again phoenix-like from its ashes.

First, on the continent as early as the tenth century, the clergy requisitioned the most elementary kind of dramatic representation—a short of *tableau*—to bring home to the spectators the simple truths of Christianity. From the continent it passed over to England with Normans. To this source may be traced the origin of both Miracle plays and Moralities. A distinction is made between *Miracles* and *Mysteries*. The Miracles are plays dealing with incidents in the lives of Saints and Martyrs. The mysteries are stories taken from the Scripture narrative. The Church services at Easter and Christmas, and particularly the responses in which the clergy and choristers took part, first showed the possibility of the dramatic representation of the truths of religion. While developments in the direction had been taking place the Latin plays of Plautus and Terence were studied and imitated in the monasteries. Thus, Hrotyvitha, abbess of the Benedictine convent in Grandersleim (Eastphalia), wrote in the tenth century six Lain plays modelled on the comedies of Terence.

The earliest extant Miracles written probably by an Englishman, are three composed by one Hilarius about the time of Stephen. They are in Latin, with refrains in Old French. Not until the next century plays began to be written in the vernacular. But a lost Miracle on the subject of St. Katherine is referred to, and its performance might have taken place towards the end of the eleventh century. It was the work of a certain Geoffrey, settled at Denstable. In the later half of the twelfth century, these performances had become quite common.

The important point that should be noted is that the earliest dramatic performances arose in the connection with the Church

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ritual, and were celebrated within the Church itself. The plays were written by the clerics and presented by the clerics. But for reasons which are stated below they gradually passed out of the hands of the clergy into those of the laity, from the Church into the churchyard and then into the street. Now first as the plays began to be popular, the over-crowding of the spectators led to the desecration of the graveyards. Secondly, the comic element and horse-play began to predominate over the religious element, and the clergy who took part in the performances, began to feel scandalized. Thirdly, the trade-guilds started celebrating the feasts of their patron-saints and began to perform mysteries on the occasion.

Outside the church, these plays were represented upon what were called pageants *i. e.*, movable platforms, which were steered round the town, halting at different stations where the performance was repeated. The Council of Vienne in 1311 revived the feast of Corpus Christi, which had been instituted by Pope Urban IV, in 1264. This festival, falling usually in June was observed by trade-guilds as a public holiday ; it was also absorbed into the dramatic *representations* of the day. The Christmas and Easter scenes, which were the original repertory, were now expanded until a complete cycle was formed, starting from the Creation and Fall of Man, dealing with the principal events in the life of Christ and terminating with the Judgement. Four such cycles have been preserved—the York Towneley, Chester, and Coventry plays.

The York cycle numbers forty-eight plays and dates from the middle of the fourteenth century. To different guilds were assigned different sets of plays :—

1. *Barkers*—(*i. e.*, Tanners), 'The Creation, Fall of Lucifer'. 2. *Plasters*—'The Creation of the Fifth Day'. 3. *Cardmakers*—'God Creates Adam and Eve.' 4. *Fullers*—'Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden'. 5. *Coopers*—'Man's Disobedience and Fall'. 6. *Armourers*—'Adam and Eve driven from Eden'. 7. *Glovers*—'Sacrifice of Cain and Abel'. 8. *Shipwrights*—'Building of the Ark', *Fishers and Mariners*—'Noah and the Flood'. 10. *Parchmaners and Bookbinders*—'Abraham's Sacrifice'. 11. *Hosier*—'The Israelities in Egypt, the Ten Plagues, and Passage of the Red Sea'. 12. *Spicers*—'Annunciation and Visit of Elizabeth to Mary'. And so on.

The Towneley or Wakefield cycle belongs to about the same date. They are thirty-two in number, and five of them correspond to five in the York cycle. The comic and realistic element is more highly developed in these plays. A typical example is the farcical episode in the scene of the visit of the shepherds to Bethlehem—and we find how a certain Mak puts the simple shepherds to sleep by using a pell, steals a sheep and passes it off as a baby to which his wife Gyll has lately given birth, and that when Mark's fraud is discovered and commotion follows, an angel appears singing 'Gloria in Excelsis'.

The Chester plays are twenty-five in number. They were acted at Whitsuntide instead of Corpus Christi. The Chester plays are more

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than any other cycles kept the object of religious instruction steadily in view. The Coventry cycle numbers forty-two plays. They are connected with Coventry by a doubtful tradition, and they were performed by a company of strolling players. Abstract personifications are introduced in the Coventry plays ; so there are such characters as Veritas Misericordia, Justiyia, Pax, etc. The Coventry plays are evidently of later date, and the feature of abstract personifications links the cycle with the earlier Moralities.

These plays continued to be performed till the close of the sixteenth century. The last performance of the York plays was in 1579. We have mentioned the pageants above. The pageants may be described as a moving play-house. It was a high scaffold with two rooms, a higher and a lower, upon four wheels. The lower room served as the green room and the higher served as a stage, being all open on the top, so that spectators might hear and see everything. They played all along the street. Thus, they began first at the Abbey gates, and when the first pageant was played, it was wheeled to the High Cross before the Mayor, and so to every street. So every street had a pageant playing before it at one time, till all the pageants appointed for the day had been played. At the end of the performance all the pageants in different streets assembled.

The exact relation of the *Miracles* to the Shakespearean drama has been thus stated by Courthope ; 'They prepared the ground in the first place, by spreading a taste for theatrical exhibitions among the people; in the second place, by furnishing opportunities, in many of the Scriptural scenes, for the direct imitation of human nature ; and in the third place, by importing into the representations foreign materials and characters, which led to the invention of the plots beyond the range of Scripture invention. These early dramatists too furnished the hints for all the nameless, generic character which figures so prominently in Shakespeare's plays. His First and Second Citizens, Carriers, Gentlemen, and Soldiers have all of them prototype in the pageants of the craftsmen : and from the familiar talk by which the actors helped the townfolk to realise, the Scripture narrative was generalised, the style made classical in the mouths of Bottom, Dogberry, and Falstaff.' There were other elements too, which influenced the later history of the drama—the pathetic situations in the scene between Abraham and Issac and in the story of Christ ; the comic element in the character of Lucifer, developing later into the colour ; the undramatic character of the bombastic Herod ; the pastoral element in the scene of the annunciation to the shepherds, etc.

The Morality plays represent the intermediate stage between the Miracle play and the true drama. The Coventry cycle first introduced, as we have noted above, allegorical characters. The Moralities develop on this line. The oldest Morality play in England seems to have been what is called a *Pater noster* play, one of a cycle of seven plays, based upon the assumption that each of the seven clauses of the Lord's Prayer is directed against one of the seven

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Deadly Sins. The play was performed at York, probably in the fourteenth century, and a guild was formed to ensure the regular performance of this cycle.

Of the Moralities of the fifteenth century, we have two examples—*Pride of Life* and *Castle of Perseverance*. In general interest and dramatic power the Moralities fall far below the Miracles. But there were advances in other respects. The Miracles drew their themes from the Scripture narrative, and therefore, had readymade plots. But the writers of Moralities had to invent a plot, and try every ingenuity of construction to create interest, there being otherwise none in the allegorical characters themselves. Every possible source was used to make the shows interesting. Scene-painting, of course, of an elementary kind, was attended to, and dramatic 'properties' were freely introduced. A distinct advance was made towards unity of construction by grouping the incidents of the play round a central figure. In the attempt to individualize allegorical characters, some real characters were depicted under moral nicknames. The barrier was finally broken when actual historical or contemporaneous people were substituted for abstract virtues and vices—and so in the form and substance of true drama already appear.

The Miracle plays are not of great literary value. Thus, much of importance attaches to them—they popularized the desire for dramatic representation and especially by the intermingling of the comic element with the tragic, prepared the way for the romantic plays of Shakespeare. The Morality plays are more important in this respect. They appear first in the fifteenth century. They gradually develop into didactic interludes and other dramatic compositions. They advanced the dramatic art by making for individuality of characterization and realism of dialogue.

The next stage in the development of drama is the *interlude*.. The interlude differs from a Morality in dealing with secular and comic subjects, and may be said to anticipate the early form of comedy. With the performance of the interludes is connected an important feature of the Elizabethan drama. The interludes were acted by household-servants and retainers. This led to the custom, among noblemen of wealth, of maintaining a band of more or less well-trained actors. So in the later part of Elizabeth's reign, we find theatrical companies, attached to noblmen *e.g.*, the Earl of Leicesterl's servants, the Queen's players, and so on.

The Masque is another form of dramatic art, which requires a brief notice here. The masque seems to have been in its origin merely a spectacle or pageant with a certain amount of pantomime thrown in. It has a dual character. Dancing and concerted movements made it resemble, the modern ballet ; songs and dialogue made it resemble the modern opera.

In the development of English drama, we may trace three influences—(1) the native tradition ; (2) the Latin ; and (3) the Italian. In many of the works of the later Elizabethans, these three

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elements often blended. The Mystery and the Miracle, the Morality and the interlude represent the development of the native tradition. From the later two develop the rough farce and chronicle play, partaking of the nature of them both. The later Elizabethan historical plays and the jesters and fools owe much to this development. So far as the development of the Latin influence is concerned, Seneca was taken as model in tragedy ; Plautus and Terence supplied the hinterland suggestions for comedy. Even the comical or farcical elements of older plays owe something to Plautus and Terence. Udall first wrote a comedy, thoroughly English in plot, incident, tone and dialogue ; but followed the classical principles of construction. The Italian influence is marked in tragedies like Gascoigne's *Jocasta* and Wheatsone's *Promos and Cassandra* and in comedy such as Gascoigne's *Supposes.*

We may note here some examples of the early form of drama. The interludes as we have pointed out above, discarded the abstract personifications of the Morality plays in favour of the living types. Heywood made this innovation, and he might have been influenced by the contemporary French *sotie* or *force.* The names of some of Heywood's interludes are *A Play of Love,* the *Four P's, John the Husband, Tyb the Wife, and Sir John the Priest* and *A Merry Play Between the Pardoner and the Friar, the Curate and the Neighbour Pratt.* They are all more or less realistic sketches. *The Four P's* will serve as a typical example. It has but a single incident and more dialogue. It is concerned with a dispute as to which of three of the P's (Poticary, Pardoner and Palmer) can tell the biggest lie, the fourth *P* (Pedlar) being appointed judge. The Poticary begins by calling the Pedlar an honest man, but the Pedlar lets in pass, and bids them each tell (in the form of a narrative piece) a specimen lie. The Poticary tells the story of a marvellous cure. The Pardoner easily beats him by telling the story of the release of a woman's soul from hell, representing that the devil was too glad to get rid of the woman. The Palmer expresses his marvel at the story of the Pardoner, and protests in good humoured sarcasm that he has never seen any one woman out of patience. He wins easily.

Nicholas Udall is the author of the first regular English comedy, *Ralph Roister Doister.* He followed Latin models. His play is divided into acts and scenes, and is written in rhyming couplets ; the action is clearly developed, the dialogue is lively and the plot has some substance, and the *dramatis personae* are *live* characters. *Gammer Garton's Needle,* traditionally attributed to Bishop John Still but now assigned to William Stevenso, disputes the claim of being the first English comedy with *Ralph Roister Doister.* There is some fun in it. All the fuss is made about Gammer Gurton's loss of a needle. The action is rather farcial. There is one noted drinking song in it—*Back and side go bare, go bare.*

The first English tragedy, *Gorboduc* or *Ferrex and Porrex* was written by Sackville and Norton, and played early in 1562. The plot is this : "Gorboduc, King of Britain, divided his realms in his life-

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time to his sons, Ferrex and Porrex. The sons, fell to dissention. The younger (Porrex) killed Ferrex. The mother (Videna), that more dearly loved to elder (Ferrex), for revenge killed the younger. The people, moved with the cruelty of the fact, rose in rebellion, and slew both father and mother. The nobility assembled, suppressed the rebels, and afterwards, for want of issue of the prince, whereby the succession of crown became uncertain, they fell to civil war, etc." The play is divided into acts and scenes, and written for the most part in stiff blank verse. There is a dumb show before each act, foreshadowing what is next to appear on the stage, and a chorus in rhyming verse, ends the act. The speeches are inordinately long. The atmosphere is one of unrelieved gloom. The only merit it possesses is the regularity of the plot and metre. The Latin models were followed in the tragedy as well as in the comedy. The comedy was founded upon Plautus ; the tragedy was founded upon Seneca. But in the subsequent developments of English drama the classical influence is to count far less than the native genius and tradition. The *Jocasta* of Gascoigne needs mention here. Like *Gorboduc*, it followed the classical models,—and was written in blank verse, and had a chorus after the act and a dumb-show before it. *Jocasta* was in itself an adaptation of Euripide's *Phoenessae*.

The later developments of English drama are to be traced through the work of the University Wits—scholars who were fostered under the atmosphere of either Oxford or Cambridge. Of the University Wits the following are the chief. George Peele of Oxford wrote *David* and *Bathsheba*, full of poetical beauties, and a court play, *The Arraignment of Paris*. Robert Greene of Cambridge and then of Oxford, led the dissipated life and wrote plays and numerous pamphlets ; his best play, being *Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay*, the Margaret of which is almost worthy of Shakespeare. He is chiefly remembered for his spiteful attack on Shakespeare in his pamphlet, *Greatsworth of Wit*. Thomas Lodge of Oxford wrote indifferent playss, with the exception of *The Looking Glass for London*, in which he collaborated with Greene. From his prose novel, *Rosalynde*, Shakespeare borrowed the plot of *As You Like It*. John Lyly of Oxford is hardly important as a dramatist. As the inventor of *Euphuism*, as set forth in his *Euphues* : *the Anatomy of Wit* and *Euphues and His England*, he had great influence on Shakespeare's development. The bastard Euphuism is ridiculed in Shakespeare's *Love's Labour Lost*, but genuine Euphuism is more truly illustrated in the tongue-fence between Benedick and Beatrice in *Much Ado About Nothing*. Thomas Kyd lived and wrote as one of the set, though we are not sure that he was at either University. He produced two very popular plays *Hieronymo* and its sequel *The Spanish Tragedy* both alike full of blood curdling horrors and vulgar rant. Yet here and there are passages of lofty poetry. The most important of the whole group and one who influenced Shakespeare's development most was Christopher Marlowe of Cambridge. His chief plays are *Tamburlaine*, *Dr. Faustus*, *The Jew of Malta* and *Edward II*. Marlowe was Shakespeare's master. *Richard III* was inspired by Marlowe's example,

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Richard II was influenced by Marlowe's *Edward II*. Marlowe's great merit lay in discovering and calling into life that blank verse which Shakespeare perfected. Marlowe, however, had no touch of humour and no sense of artistic proportion ; in straining after the vast and awful, he sometimes degenerated into bombast. But a large proportion of his work has a force and poetic beauty, hardly surpassed by Shakespeare.

The work of the University Wits is thus summed up by Saintsbury, "In all we and the many-sided activity of the Shakespearean drama, as it was to be, sprawling and struggling in a kind of swaddling clothes of which it cannot get rid, and which hamper and cripple its movements. In all, there is present a most extraordinary and unique rant and bombast of expression which reminds one of the shrieks and yells of a band of healthy boys just let out to play. The passages which (thanks to Pistol's incomparable quotations and parodies of them) are known to everyone, are scattered broadcast in their originals, and are evidently meant quite seriously throughout the work of these poets. Side by side with this is another mania, foible of classical allusion. The heathen gods and goddesses, the localities of Greeks and Roman poetry are put on the mouths of all the characters without the remotest attempt to consider propriety or relevance on the other hand, the merits, though less evenly distributed in degree, are equally constant in kind. In Kyd, in Greene still more, in Peele more still, in Marlowe most of all, phrases and passages of blinding and dazzling poetry flash out of the mist of the bombast and the tedium.

Shakespeare belonged not to the University group, but to the rival set of actor-playwrights. Of the actor playwrights who preceded Shakespeare, we know very little. They worked in groups, not individually, for the benefit of their respective companies. The work they contributed was the creation of drama, rather than of poetry. They made the characters and the plot develop each other, acting and reacting on each other as organic parts of a living whole, instead of using the plot as a peg on which to hang splendid speeches, or as in Marlowe's case, a mere background to throw out in lurid light the hero's all-devouring egotism.

Of Shakespeare's contemporaries, four were especially connected with him by personalities, or by the character of their work—Jonson, Chapman, Marston and Dekker. Ben Jonson made his name, (through Shakespeare's good offices, it is said) by *Everymen in his Humour*. He wrote many plays, the chief being his two Roman plays, *Sejanus* and *Catiline*, which are deficient in human interest. He had a keen eye for the characteristic foibles of men and women and a wide range of observation. His plays thus exhibit every variety of wit, subtle character-analysis, and knowledge of the world. Jonson's genius was too unsympathetic to make him a perfect master of the drama. His *dramatis personae* do not come home to our hearts as Shakespeare's do. George Chapman was a close friend of Jonson's and partly resembled him both in personal character and

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literary skill. His best comedy is *All Fools*, his best tragedy, *Busyd' Ambois*. His dramatic work is far inferior to Johnson's, except, in occasional passage. John Marston wrote several plays, the earliest and best being *Antonia and Mellida* ; his best comedy, though based upon an improbable and unpleasant plot, is *What You Will*. In spite of blood-curdling bombast there are fine passages in his plays. Thomas Dekker, rather a back writer, did a large amount of dramatic work, chiefly in collaboration with others. He approaches Shakespeare far nearer than any of his contemporaries in pathos and in the delineation of womanhood.

Life in Elizabethan England

Two potent forces—the Renaissance and the Reformation—are to be reckoned with in estimating Elizabethan England. In England happily one was not opposed to the other—both the forces blended and co-operated. The Reformation in England tended to be *humanistic* and Renaissance was not divorced from morality, as it was in Italy. A great uplifting to the spirit was produced by these two movements. In the first place the medieval obsession with death and the other world was replaced by the very joy of living. Secondly, intellectual curiosity, quest for knowledge unbounded and unexplored became the keynote of the age. Marlowe's *Tamburlaine* well expressed the spirit of the age.

"Nature that fram'd us of four elements
Warring within our breasts for regiment,
Doth teach us all to have aspiring minds :
Our souls, whose facilities can comprehend
The wondrous architecture of the world,
And measure every wandering planet's course,
Still climbing after knowledge infinite,
And always moving as the restless spheres
Will us to wear ourselves and never rest."

A sense of the unlimited potentialities of man must have been engendered by the Renaissance, when we find Shakespeare writing :

"What a piece of work is man ! How noble in reason ? How infinite in faculties, in form and moving ! How express and like a god the beauty of the world ! The paragon of animals !"

Believing in its own unlimited powers the man's soul was outquesting in both spiritual and material spheres. That is the meaning of the manifold energy and productivity of the Elizabethan age in music, poetry, drama, and not less in geographical discoveries and explorations. We might say that it was the spiritual fusion between the old and the new world that gave birth to the Renaissance—the old world of Greece and Rome, and the new world across the seas.

This is only one side of the picture. The Elizabethans lived in the full tide of life. Life and more life—and its aching joys and raptures held them fascinated. They aimed at draining the cup of life to the dregs. To exhaust all possibilities of life, material and spiritual, to enjoy all that life may yield, and to know all that life

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may mean—this goal the Elizabethans set before them. They had very sound views about education. No academic education would do for them. Education broad-based upon all the needs of human nature. Music on the one hand, proficiency in field-sports, on the other, were parts of that education. Education too was directed towards increasing the range and power of enjoyment and self-expression, increasing the pleasures of the cultivated senses as well as of the cultivated mind.

Love of pomp and pageantry was a characteristic of the age. Queen Elizabeth delighted in fine and magnificent clothes. She insisted too that her courtiers should be richly dressed. Gifts of fine clothes were very commonly exchanged and highly appreciated. In Ben Jonson's *Every Man out of his Humour*, we find this a topic of the day : "'t were good you turned four or five hundred acres of our best land into two or three trunks of apparel." Hentzner, a German, who visited England in 1598, gives this picture of Queen Elizabeth going to Church on a Sunday. "That day she was dressed in white silk, bordered with pearls of the size of beans, and over it a mantle of black silk, shot with silver threads ; her train was very long, the end of it borne by a marchioness ; instead of a chain, she had an oblong collar of gold and jewels." Of pageants and processions people seemed to have had no end. We have the description of the elaborate entertainments, given by the Earl of Leicester in honour of the Queen, at Kenilworth Castle. As a boy, Shakespeare might have witnessed the entertainments at Kenilworth. In this pageant there was a Triton in the likeness of a mermaid, and Proteus sitting on a dolphin's back. Within the body of this sham dolphin was hidden a band of musicians ; and, as usual, fireworks and rockets gave an additional glamour to the scene. Perhaps Shakespeare alludes to this pageant in *A Midsummer Night's Dream,* II. ii :

"Once I sat upon a promontory,
And heard a mermaid on a dolphin's back
Uttering such dulcet and harmonious breath
That the rude sea grew civil at her song,
And certain stars shot madly from their spheres,
To hear the sea-maid's music."

The age was distinctly and avowedly in favour of physical enjoyment, which the growing wealth of England enabled to be realized. William Harrison in his *Description of Britaine* (1567) has the following observation on the innovations that were brought about by the growing wealth of England :

"There are old men yet dwelling in the village where I remain who have noted three things to be marvellously altered in England within their sound remembrance ; and other three things too much increased. One is the multitude of chimneys lately erected whereas in their young days there were not above two or three, if so many, in most uplandish towns of the realm (the religious houses and manor places of their lords always expected, and peradventure some great personages, but each one made his fire against a reredos in the hall, where he dined and dressed his meat. The second in the great

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(although not general) amendment of lodging ; for, said they, our fathers yea and we ourselves also have lain fulloft upon straw pallets on rough mats covered only with a sheet under coverlets made of dogswain or hopharlots (I use their own terms) and a good round log under their heads instead of a bolster or pillow..... pillows (said they) were thought meant only for women in childbed.....The third thing they tell of is the exchange of vessels, as of treene (wooden) platters into powter, and wooden spoons into silver or tin." New houses and new inns sprang up everywhere in the land. Visitors from foreign countries noted the prodigality of England in diet. Harrison says that many strange herbs, plants and annual fruits were daily brought into England from the Indies, the American colonies, Taprobane, Canary Isles and all parts of the world. The nobility of England, who employed French and foreign cooks, fed upon variety of dishes, preparations of different kinds of meat, beef, mutton, veal, lamb, kid, pork, cony, capon, pig, etc., and of different kinds of fish and wild fowl.

Naval fights and naval enterprises and colonizations provided stirring times of which records have been left in Richard Hakluyt's book, *The Principal Navigations, Voyages, Traffiques and Discoveries of the English Nation*. Piratical activities, often of the most daring and reckless kind, formed the principal part of the naval expeditions. But apart from these organized voyages, single individuals sometimes undertook extensive journeys not only through Europe, but into the remote East. Echoes of the far-sounding adventures occur in the literature of the time. Shakespeare makes Othello narrate his adventures to Desdemona, the best art, perhaps, of capturing the fancy of a young girl in those days. In *The Tempest* there is an allusion to the popular practice of travellers, in those days, of leaving their money with a merchant on condition that he might keep it if they failed to return but must pay fivefold if they safely returned. Shakespeare's phrase, "putters out of five for one," has made this practice familiar to the reader.

Travelling was also a part of education. For example, it was an ambition of the educated young Englishmen to visit Italy, the home of the Renaissance. Shakespeare in his days must have personally met many who had returned from Italy. His unerring touch in the description of Italian scenery and atmosphere—and even of minor details regarding such can be accounted for by his acquaintance with such travellers. The educated Elizabethans could speak several languages. Apart from classical learning which was diligently pursued many in the course of their traveles picked up French and Italian, and paraded their bits of learning. Thomas Wilson in his *System of Rhetoric* writes, "Some far-journeyed gentlemen, at their return home, like as they love to go in foreign apparel, so they will powder their talk with over-sea language. He that cometh lately out of France will talk French—English and never blush at the matter. Another chops in with English Italianated, and applieth the Italian phrase to our English speaking." Similarly, Ascham in his *Schoolmaster* speaks.

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of the English Italianate as a devil incarnate, one who has adopted the vices of Italy and abandoned the virtues of his own country, Broad-based education, supplemented by travels, should have liberalized the mind and abolished superstitions and barbarous practice. But it did nothing of the kind. The existence of witches exercised a tyrannic spell upon the imagination of the Elizabethans. The Statute against witches was passed in the very year of Shakespeare's birth, and stringently enforced in Elizabeth's reign, and re-enacted with severer penalties in the first year of James I. The penal code of the Elizabethan age was most brutal. "Whippings, hangings, burnings, drownings, disembowellings, and mutilations were as common and apparently as attractive as bear-baiting and cock-fights. Carcasses on gibbets, traitors' heads on spikes living, felons with mutilated hands and ears must have made the counterfeit horrors of *Titus Andronicus* more amusing than painful to the average play-goer. Whipping was the mildest of punishments on shipboard. It seems to have been a superstition that to avert misfortunes the ship-boys should be regularly whipped whether or not they deserved it, a sacrifice to the malignant fates. Children were unmercifully beaten alike by their parents and teachers ; even a girl of royal blood and a model child, Lady, Jane Grey, was cruelly punished, as Ascham relates, for the slightest fault."

Glimpses into the condition of the common folk in the Elizabethan era few and far between in the chronicles of the time. Harrison admits the superiority of the English husbandmen and artisans. He describes the skilful craftsmanship of the builders ; the excellence of the fruits and vegetables grown by the gardeners ; and the good breed of English cattle-sheep. Trevelyan writes, "In the country-town and villages where the industry as well as the agriculture of the country was carried on a considerable proportion of the inhabitants were trained craftsmen. Apprenticeship was the key to the new national life almost as much as villainage had been to the old. The apprentice system was no longer left to local usage and municipal enforcement, but was controlled on a uniform national pattern for town and conntry by Elizabeth's Statute of Artificers which remained in force with little modification for over two hnndred years. No man could set up as master or as workman till he had served his seven years' apprenticeship. In that way the youth of the country obtained technical education and social discipline that went someway to compensate for the unfelt want of a universal system of school education. Youth was under control of a master, in some cases until the age of twenty-four."

Traders and lawyers seemed to have had the best time of it. Harrison writes, "All the wealth of the land doth flow unto our common lawyers, of whom some one having practised little above 13 or 14 years, is able to buy a purchase of so many one thousand pounds ; which argueth that they wax rich apace, and will be richer if their clients, become not the more wise and wary hereafter." The Elizabethans, it appears, were as ready to go to law as they were

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ready to fight. Shakespeare's knowledge of legal phrases and legal terminology cannot be anything but remarkable if this fact is remembered. The point was that the rich get richer and the poor got poorer. There was unemployment on the country-side in those days though the problem was not so acute as it is at present. Owing to unemployment there was a growing number of landless and masterless men, sturdy beggars, thieves, and highwaymen who infested the common highways and made travelling unsafe. The Gadshill robbery in *Henry IV* is but a burlesque of the actual happenings in those days. The unemployed drifted mostly to London. They were chiefly soldiers and sailors disbanded from the wars in Ireland and the Low Countries, refugees and outlaws from abroad : and they were armed with some kind of weapon from the primitive cudgel to the latest rapier. The street-quarrels of the Capulets and Montagues in *Romeo and Juliet* were likely to be a reproduction of scenes that Shakespeare had witnessed in the streets of London.

The Elizabethans had but a poor idea of sanitation. Trevelyan writes, "Washing of clothes and persons was much neglected especially in winter. Conveniences, which we consider necessities did not exist. The death-rate even in upper class families was very heavy, and the poor only expected a slender proportion of their numerous progeny to servive. Medicine was in its infancy." London was frequently in the grip of epidemics. It was twice ravaged by plague in Shakespeare's life-time. Consumption was quite common : small-pox commoner still ; in the low-lying areas ague raged from year to year. "It is hard for us to realize that the abounding vitality and buoyancy of spirit which so amazes us in the Elizabethans coexisted with a state of public health in which disease almost unchecked scourged rich and poor alike."

LIFE OF SHAKESPEARE

Shakespeare at Stratford

The following entry in the register of baptisms is relied upon in fixing Shakespeare's birth approximately : "1564, April 26, Gulielmus Filius Johannes Shakespeare."

(William son (of) John Shakespeare)

The practice was to baptize the child within a few days of its birth ; so 23rd April was fixed on as Shakespeare's birthday.

His birth-place was Stratford-on-Avon in Warwickshire. Round the town are more or less distant hills, and the view of it from the nearest, the Welcombe Hill, shows the town nestling in the broad valley.

His father, John Shakespeare appears to have been a glover. He was besides a corn-dealer or farmer, and trader in all kinds of agricultural produce. William Shakespeare was the first son and third child of John Shakespeare, and of Mary Arden, daughter of a husbandman and landowner. John Shakespeare throve in worldly life till he rose to be Mayor of Stratford, and then its chief alderman,—and thus he claimed a coat-of-arms as a gentleman.

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It is usually held that Shakespeare went to the free Stratford Grammar School at the age of seven and stayed there till he was fourteen or sixteen at the latest, when he picked up his "little Latin and less Greek." If his picture of the whining schoolboy, with his satchel and shining morning face, creeping like snail unwillingly to school be not impersonal, then we may suppose that Shakespeare was at some school, and had written from his personal experience. There are frequent reference to school-day's pranks in his plays. "The blessed sun of heaven prove a micher (*truant*), and eat blackberries ?" (I *Henry* IV, II, iv). It is pleasing to the fancy to imagine that Shakespeare had his full quota of a schoolboy's experience and pranks. He must have gone bird's-nesting and joined in Mayday, Christmas, and new Year's games ; helped make hay, gone to harvest-homes and sheep shearings (*Winter's Tale*, IV, iii), fished (*Much Ado*, III, i), ran out with the harriers(*Venus and Adonis*, st.113-118), and loved a dog and horse (*Venus and Adonis*, st. 44-52 ; *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, IV. i ; *Richard* II, V. v. ; I *Henry* IV. i, etc.) as dearly as every boy in England did.

Lately, Professor J. D. Wilson (*The Essential Shakespeare*, p. 41) has questioned the Grammar School education of Shakespeare, and imagines that Shakespeare's father, being an ardent Catholic, the boy might have received his education as a singing-boy in the service of some great Catholic nobleman, which explains how he became an actor.

Now whether Shakespeare had any schooling or not, he seems to have had a keen and alert mind which amassed a rich store of learning, quaint and miscellaneous. Lowell writes, "What kind of culture Shakespeare had is uncertain : how much he had is disputed; that he had as much as he wanted, and of whatever kind he wanted, must be clear to whoever considers the questions."

John Shakespeare later appears to have fallen on evil days and his son was consequently withdrawn from school. What Shakespeare did after he had left school is uncertain, and must be left to the fancy of every reader. It is variously stated that he was for some time a schoolmaster in the country, that he was apprenticed to a butcher, that he was apprenticed to his father. All that we can be certain of is that he stayed for some time longer at Stratford, that he noted the many rural scenes around him, took stock of the wildflowers and the birds, and learnt much of the lore of dogs and horses which he displays in his works. His frequent references to sports, hawking, coursing, and hunting, make us believe that he must have seen all of these frequently and probably have indulged in them personally.

It is on record that Shakespeare at the age of eighteen was married to Anne Hathaway, his senior by eight years by special licence on November 28, 1582 and the issue of the marriage, Susanna, a daughter, was baptized on May 26, 1583. His twins—Hamnet and Judith were baptized on February 2, 1585. Thus, when he was hardly twenty-one he was burdened with three children and a wife eight years older than himself and it is suggested that he must have worried about them.

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Whether his marriage was a happy one must remain an open question. Shakespeare of course, dwells on the evils of a woman wedding one younger than herself in *Twelfth Night,* II. iv, of the disdain and discord which grow through such in the compatible union in the *Tempest*, IV. i, of a wife's jealousy in the *Comedy of Errors,* V, i. But the inference must be left to every reader as it pleases him. J. D. Wilson asserts, "in any case—to nail one more slander to the counter—there is no ground whatever for imagining that his married life was an unhappy one, which is not the same thing as saying that he himself was a model husband."

His domestic entanglement might have been the reason for his abruptly leaving Stratford to seek his fortunes elsewhere. Tradition gives a different cause, that Shakespeare joined some wild young fellows in breaking into Sir Thomas Lucy's park at Charlecote, about three miles from Stratford, and stealing his deer, for which, and for writing an impossibly bad ballad against Sir Thomas, the latter so persecuted the poet that he had to leave Stratford. But it is all uncertain. It is, however, generally supposed, though without any sure ground, that Shakespeare left Stratford in or about 1586. "The Queen's Players" paid a visit to Stratford in 1587. It is said by some that this was probably the turning-point in Shakespeare's life. At any rate, sooner or later, he felt his birth-town for London, and took the way to fame and fortune."

Shakespeare in London

The legend that Shakespeare, on his first appearance in London, employed himself in holding horses' heads outside theatre doors, or worked in a printer's or lawyer's office, is now discredited. The earliest notice of Shakespeare in London occurs in 1592 in the death-bed effusion of Robert Greene—*A Groatsworth of Wit Bought with Million of Repentance,* in which Shakespeare is referred to as "an upstart crow, beautified with our feathers" and as "Johannes factorium". Henry Chettle, who edited Greene's pamphlet makes a nice apology to Shakespeare. It may be inferred from Greene's ill-natured allusion that Shakespeare must have been actively engaged in writing plays by 1592, that some at least of them were based upon the work of other men.

The playhouse with which tradition connects Shakespeare was called "The Theatre", and was built by a player and joiner, James Burbage in 1577, in the fields outside the City Walls, on the west of Bishopsgate Street, in Shoreditch. In 1598 it was pulled down and in 1599 rebuilt as "The Globe", on Bankside Southwark.

The records of Shakespeare's life and doings henceforth are fairly continuous. Not long after he found a patron in Henry Wriothesley, Earl of Southampton. In 1596, he seems to have been well off enough to apply for a coat-of-arms. On August 11, 1596, Shakespeare's only son, Hamnet died, and was buried at Stratford. His son's death must have been a great blow to Shakespeare, wishing as he did to found a family. Now he seems to have been growing rich. In 1597, he bought for £ 60 the largest house in his native

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town, New Place, and later he made further investment in land in the neighbourhood, when "The Theatre" was rebuilt as the "Globe." Shakespeare was taken in as a partner—"a fellowship in a cry of players'. (*Hamlet*, III. ii.) The admission as a partner into the profits of the *New Globe* marks definitely his success in London better than his purchase of New Place of Stratford.

In the beginning of the year 1601, Essex's rebellion broke out, and, for his share in it, Lord Southampton was imprisoned in the Tower whence he was not released until James I's accession in 1603. Shakespeare's fortunes thus suffered temporary eclipse. On March 24, 1603, Queen Elizabeth died, and as Chettle complains, "the silver-tongued Melicent" (Shakespeare) did not "drop from his honied Muse one sable tear." On James's accession, Shakespeare's company, entitled, "The Lord Chamberlain's Company, originally entitled, "The Lord Chamberlain's Servants" assumed the title of "The King's Players."

Shakespeare at Stratford Again

Shakespeare's life in London is an unbroken record of success and growing prosperity. "The rest of his story, so far as it can be read in the records is one of continued good fortune. In the wordly sense, at least, Shakespeare had become, and remained till his death, a prosperous and wealthy man. The numerous documentary references to him that have come down to us are mainly concerned with property bought, money used for in the courts, or his plays of which were acted or published."

In or about 1609, after the period of his great tragedies, Shakespeare is supposed to have left London for Stratford. "There is nothing definite to fix the change to any one year : but the internal evidence of his plays and sonnets, as well as the fact that he must, before he made his will, have sold or released to his partners all his interest in the Globe and Blackfriar's profits and in his plays, almost obliges us to conclude that his leaving town dates from 1609 or thereabouts." Since his retirement to Stratford he seems to have been once, suing for the recovery of his share in the tithes which he had bought in 1605, and to have purchased a house and a piece of ground near the Blackfriar's Theatre. This Blackfriar's House was part of a large property belonging to the Bacon family, and when this was cut up and sold, Bacon's widow Anne (mother of the great Francis Bacon) retained the title-deeds. On April 26, 1615, Shakespeare associated himself with his fellow-buyers in a Bill of Complaint to recover the title-deeds, and the widow's heir, Matthew Bacon, was ordered by the Lord Chancellor to bring the deeds to court.

Having executed his will on March 25, Shakespeare died at New Place, on April 23, 1616, and was buried in the chancel of Stratford Church on the 25th. The only report as to the cause of his death is in the Diary (printed in 1839) of the Rev. John Word, who was appointed Vicar of Stratford in 1662, that "Shakespeare, Drayton, and Ben Jonson had a merie meeting, and it seems drank too hard for Shakespeare died of a fever there contracted."

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Chronology of Chief Incidents in Shakespeare's Life.

1564. April 26, Shakespeare baptized.

1571. At the age of seven, according to the custom of the time, Shakespeare's school-life probably began.

1575. Queen Elizabeth visited the Earl of Leicester at Kenilworth, Shakespeare's father might have taken him to witness the Kenillworth festivities (*Midsummer Night's Dream,* II, iii).

1578. Shakespeare left school. His father's fortunes at a low ebb.

1582 Shakespeare married Anne Hathaway.

1583. May 26, Shakespeare's daughter, Susanna, baptized.

1585. February 2, Shakespeare's twin children Hamnet and Judith, baptized.

1586. Shakespeare left Stratford.

1592. Shakespeare referred to in Greene's *Groatsworth of Wit,*

1593. *Venus and Adonis* published and dedicated to Southampton.

1594. *Titus Andronicus* acted by the Earl of Sessex's men.

1596. August 11. Shakespeare's son, Hamnet buried.

1597. May 4. Shakespeare bought New Place.

1598. Francis Mere's *Palladis Tamia* published, which contained a list of Shakespeare's plays up-to-date in a chronological order. Shakespeare acted in Ben Jonson's *Every Man in his Humour.*

1599. Shakespeare purchased shares in the *Globe.*

1601. Essex executed, and Southampton imprisoned. John Shakespeare buried.

1602. May 1. Shakespeare purchased one hundred and seven acres of arable land which he added to New Place.

1603. February 2. Shakespeare's company performed before the Queen at Richmond.

1604. March 15. Shakespeare took part in the procession on the occasion of James' entry.

1607. Susanna married John Hill.

1608. September 9. Sussana's mother buried. Shakespeare established himself at New Place.

1609. *Sonnets* published.

1613. *The Tempest* performed at the festivities in celebration of the marriage of Princess Elizabeth with the Elector Frederick. The *Globe* burnt down.

1716. January 25, Shakespeare made his will, not signed till March 25.
April 23. Died.
April 25. Buried in the chancel of Stratford Church.

Chronology of Shakespeare's Plays

Evidence—External and Internal

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External evidence consists of (1) Entries of Poems and Plays, before or on publication by publishers, in the *Registers* of the Stationers' Company incorporated by Queen Mary in 1557. (2) The publications of the Poems and Plays. (3) Allusions in contemporary books, diaries, letters, etc.

The *Stationers' Registers*, and publication establish the dates of two Poems and six Plays, all printed in Shakespeare's life-time, except *As You Like It* which is mentioned in the *Stationer's Registers*, and of which the date can be conjectured to be 1600.

Below is given the table of results :
Venus and Adonis entered and published in 1593 ;
Lucrece entered in 1594 ;
I Henry IV entered in 1597 and published in 1598.
Much Ado entered in 1600.
Hamlet entered in 1602, published in 1603-4.
King Lear entered in 1607,published in 1608.
Pericles entered in 1608, published in 1609.

Allusions in contemporary books, etc. give the dates of five plays : *Romeo and Juliet*, before 1595 ; *Julius Caesar*, 1601 ; *Twelfth Night*, February 1602 ; *Winter's Tale*, 1611 ; *Henry VIII*, 1613.

The books and diaries which supply the dates are as follows ; Weever's Sonnet in his *Epigrammes*, 1595 ; for *Romeo and Juliet* ; Weever's *Mirror of Martyrs*, 1601 for *Julius Caesar* ; Manningham's *Diary*, Feb. 2, 1601-2 for *Twelfth Night ;* Dr. Forman's *Diary*, for *Winter's Tale*, 1611 ; (1) Thomas Lorkin's letter to Sir Thomas Puckering, dated "London, this last of June, 1613" and (2) John Chamberlaine's letter to Sir Ralph Winwood, dated London, 8th July, 1613, both of which refer to the burning of *The Globe* or *Playhouse*, during the performance of *Henry VIII.*

Internal evidence consists of allusions in the plays to past or contemporary events, and also relies upon the Style and Temper of the works. Allusions in the plays to contemporary events suggest positively the date of one play, *Henry V.* The Prologue to Act V refers to the Earl of Essex :

"Now the general of our gracious empress,
As in good time he may from Ireland coming,
Bringing rebellion broached on his sword,
How many would the peaceful city quit
To welcome him !"

The Prologue to Act I refers to the newly-built wooden "O" or Globe Theatre, opened in 1599 :—

"Can this cockpit hold,
The vasty fields of France ? or may we cram,
Within this wooden O, the very casques,
That did affright the air at Agincourt ?"

The reference to the great earthquake of April 6, 1580 in *Romeo and Juliet* helps to determine its date :—

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"Come Lammas-eve at night shall she be fourteen.
Susan and she—God rest all Christian souls :
Were of an age : well, Susan is with God :
She was too good for me : but, as I said,
On Lammas-eve at night shall she be fourteen :
That shall she, marry ; I remember it well.
'Tis since the earthquake now eleven years."

This gives either 1591 or 1593 for the date of the play.

For the rest of Shakespeare's plays, *i. e.*, twenty-six out of thirty-seven plays, we have to depend on the style and temper of the works. First, we may take the evidence of metre. If we compare *The Comedy of Errors*, an earlier play, with *The Winter's Tale*, we may deduce the following results : In the *Errors* the *end-stopped* lines *i. e.*, with a pause at the end are a marked feature but in *The Winter's Tale*, the lines are *run-on* (*i. e.*, the sense is carried from one line to the next) with a fair proportion of weak or light endings which help the process, and varied central pauses—thus the lines in the *Errors* are stiff and formal, while in *The Winter's Tale* they have the ease and freedom of natural talk. Further, in the *Errors*, lines are regular—five iambic feet, but in the *Winter's Tale* there is sometimes an extra or eleventh syllable or even a twelfth syllable. The results may be thus tabulated :

(i) Run-on lines in the *Errors :* I in 7·66.
The Winter's Tale I in 2·3
(ii) Extra-syllables in the *Errors : nil*
The Winter's Tale : I in 1·75.
(iii) Weak endings in the *Errors : nil*
The Winter's Tale : I in 4·2.

The proportion of rhyming lines is another test. *Love's Labour's Lost*, a very early play may be compared with the latest plays, *The Tempest* and *The Winter's Tale*.

Love's Labour's Lost.. .....1,028 rhyme, to 579 blank, or 1 to ·56.

The Tempest ....2 rhyme to 1,458 blanks or 1 to 779.
The Winter's Tale.....O rhyme, to 1,825 blank, or 1 to infinity.

So we may compare the proportion of *run-on* to end stopped lines in three of the earliest and latest plays :

Earliest Plays :—
Love's Labour's Lost.....1 in 18·14.
The Comedy of Errors.....1 in 10·7.
The Two Gentlemen of Verona.....1 in 10.
Latest Plays :—
The Tempest.....1 in 3·02.
Cymbeline ...1 in 2·52
The Winter's Tale.....1 in 2·12.

Dowden, in his *Growth of Shakespeare's Mind and Art*, thus sums up the characteristics of Shakespeare's early plays—(*i*) frequency

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of rhyme in various arrangements ; (*ii*) occurrence of rhymed doggerel verse ; (*iii*) comparative infrequency of feminine or double ending, of weak ending, of unstopped line ; (*iv*) regular internal structure of the line ; (*v*) frequency of classical allusions ; (*vi*) frequency of puns and conceits ; (*vii*) wit and imagery drawn out in detail to the point of exhaustion ; (*viii*) clowns, who are, by comparison with the later comic characters, outstanding persons in the play, told off specially for clownage ; (*ix*) the presence of termagant or shrewish woman ; (*x*) soliloquies addressed rather to the audience (to explain the speaker's self) ; (*xi*) symmetry in the grouping of persons.

Now, proceeding from Shakespeare's early to later plays we can trace the changes in style and metre which marked the progress of Shakespeare's mind and spirit. He soon gave up the doggerel, the excessive word-play, the quip and crank of his early plays, their puns conceits and occasional bombast ; he curbed his exuberant fancy by the control of the higher imagination and poetic creation ; he subdued the rhetoric of his historical plays ; he exchanged the playfulness of fancy, the verbal ingenuity the farce of the early plays for the death struggle of the passions, the terror of his tragedies, laying bare the inmost recesses of the human soul ; and then passed serene and tender, to the pastorals and romances of his later age.

A Note on Folio and Quarto : The term *folio* is applied to a book the pages of which are formed by a sheet of paper folded once, and the term *quarto*, to a book the pages of which are formed by a sheet of paper folded twice. All the plays of Shakespeare except *Pericles* were issued in Folio (known as the first Folio), in 1623 by his friends and fellow-actors, John Heminge and Henry Condell, and dedicated to the Earls of Pembroke and of Montgomery. Only seventeen of Shakespeare's plays were printed in Quarto during his life-time. The first Folio is of great value, as it is, in some instances, more correct than quartos, and contains seventeen plays, of which no quarto editions exist. The second Folio appeared in 1632, the third in 1663-64, the fourth in 1685. Single plays appeared in Quarto form during Shakespeare's life-time and throughout a large part of the seventeenth century.

Classification of Shakespeare's Plays in the Folio of 1629

Histories
Henry VI
Richard III
Richard II
King John
Henry IV
Henry V
Henry VIII

Tragedies
Titus Andronicus
Romeo and Juliet
Julius Ceaser

(Tragedies, contd.)
Cymbeline
Timon of Athens

Comedies
Love's Labour's Lost
Comedy of Errors
Two Gentlemen of Verona
Midsummer Night's Dream
Merchant of Venice
Taming of the Shrew
Merry Wives of Windsor
Much Ado About Nothing
As You Like It

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Hamlet	*Twelfth Night*
Othello	*All's Well that Ends Well*
King Lear	*Measure for Measure*
Macbeth	*Troilus and Cressida*
Antony and Cleopatra	*Winter's Tale*
Coriolanus	*Tempest*

Development of Shakespeare's Dramatic Art

FIRST PERIOD

The following plays belong to the First Period (1587—1594 ?)

Love's Labour's Lost, The Comedy of Errors, Midsummer Night's Dream, Two Gentlemen of Verona, Romeo and Juliet (with the poems of *Venus* and *Adonis* and *Lucrece*, and probably the Troilus part of *Troilus and Cressida), Richard II, 1, 2, and 3, Henry VI* and *Richard III.*

In the first period, Shakespeare served his dramatic apprenticeship. In the earliest of his plays he shows an extraordinary facility in expression and a rare gift of phrasing which ever distinguished his work. But the verse form with the practice of rhyming and five rigid iambic feet did not make for appropriate dramatic expression. Even when rhyme was not used, the verse seemed to be crude and strained.

The use of Blank Verse by Marlowe in *Tamburlaine* (1587) opened a new era in dramatic composition. The possibilities of blank verse were but partly revealed by Marlowe in his creation of glowing forms and gorgeous scenes, inspired by the stirring events and great stories of danger of discovery of Elizabethan days. Shakespeare saw his opportunity. From blank verse he drew music and colour—myriad toned and myriad-tinted. He could express through its medium the delicate beauty of a flower the most gentle and the most unruly of emotions, the sadness of the death-scene, the splendid pageantry of state and arms.

In this striving towards freedom of expression, Shakespeare first began to discard rhyme, and resort to such metrical devices as *double endings, light and weak endings.* In *Love's Labour's Lost* there are only 9 double endings (*i. e.*) extra unaccented syllables at the end of lines) but in *Richard III*, which ends the First Period, there are 570 double endings. In the plays of the first period there are only 17 light endings and 2 weak endings but in the later play of *Antony and Cleopatra* alone there are 71 light and 28 weak endings—and they are ever on the increase in his later plays. A light ending is a monosyllable at the end of a line, on which the voice can dwell in reading and a weak ending is a monosyllable at the end of a line, which, both in sense and pronunciation, is carried on to the next line, *And* is a *light*, and *where* is a *weak* ending in the following verse from *Coriolanus*, III. ii.

"Which else would put you to your fortune, *and*
The hazard of much blood.
I would dissemble with any nature *where*

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My fortunes and my friends at stake, required
I should do so in honour."

This external evidence apart, the plays of the First Period are linked together in plot and expression—they are mainly lyrical in character and are steeped in the gaiety of youth. In *Love's Labour's Lost,* Shakespeare ridicules contemporary mannerisms and affections, but the noteworthy fact is Shakespeare's use of *mistaken indentity,* which is the source of so much fun in his early comedies and of symmetrical plot. The symmetrical plot and mistaken identity devices are employed again in the *Comedy of Errors, A Midsummer Night's Dream* and *Two Gentlemen of Verona.* Characters are not sufficiently individualized in the early plays. *Richard III* is a one-character play, written under the shadow of Marlowe. *Richard II* has plenty of rhyme, quibbles and weak lines, matched by inconsistencies in the central figure ; its only relieving feature is its lyrical fervour. As regards the art of construction it may be noted that Shakespeare first intermingles themes in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* which develops into a plot with an under-plot in later plays ; but in *Romeo* and the two *Richards,* Shakespeare discovers and applies the principle of causing the action to revolve round, and depend upon, one or two central figures, of making character and not incident, the source of the action—a principle which is fully carried out in his tragedies. We note also that there is an increasing command over materials displayed by Shakespeare, and an increasing insight into character and mind. The lyricism of Shakespeare's early plays comes to full flower in *Romeo* and in *The Two Gentlemen.* The poems *Venus* and *Lucrece* are the work of a student who is intoxicated with beauty —the beauty of the material universe as well as the beauty of mind and imagination.

SECOND PERIOD

To the Second Period (1594 to 1601) belong *King John, The Merchant of Venice. The Taming of the Shrew, 1 and 2 Henry IV, Henry V, The Marry Wives of Windsor, Much Ado About Nothing, As You Like It, Twelfth Night, All's Well that Ends Well,* and the *Sonnets.*

In the Second Period the art of characterization is considerably advanced. First he touches on many different phases of life and presents a gallery of portraits. The political plays (*King John, Henry IV, Henry V)* epitomize the great era of Elizabeth's reign, and embody her political insight and wisdom :

"Henry IV advises his son that foreign wars unite a nation and Henry V acts on that policy ; the questions of Elizabeth's sovereignty, her right to the crown, are reflected in *John* and *Henry IV,* as are the Elizabethan necessity of preventing foreign intervention in national politics, and the principle that vexatious controversy, concerning the right to rule, might be, and was, less important than the duty of ruling strongly, wisely and well. Throughout is the plea for national unity ; throughout is the exultation of national strength,

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pride of England, love of its green fields and its sea-bound shores, rejoicing in conquests, faith in its power, and hope for its future."

As illustrative of Shakespeare's insight into character, it may be pointed out that he shows wonderful knowledge of the Celtic temperament in these plays ; Glendower in *1 Henry IV*, credulous, superstitious, passionate, overruled in his contracts by prophecies : Gower in *2 Henry IV* Fluellen in *Henry V*, one who loves argument, quotes precedent, forgets names, likes literature, and is brave and hardy, and lastly Sir Hugh Evans in the *Merry Wives*, a most "vehement" man.

Secondly, Shakespeare shows rare skill and delicacy in drawing the women characters. Portia in the *Merchant of Venice* is the beginning of that succession of beautiful types of splendid womanhood whose watchwords is *devotion*, and whose beauty and purity touch their character with pathos in their struggles against fate, Portia foreshdows Helena, Ophelia, Isabella, Desdemona and Cordelia. Rosalind and Celia of *As You Like It* are of an ideal cast. Rosalind and Celia wandering weariiy, with their devoted Touchstone, through the wild, wonderful ways of a strange forest remind one of Virgil's *Eclogues*, where love-lorn shepherds tell the story of their love-sorrow in metrical cadences. There is a less pleasant and more passionate note in *All's Well That Ends Well*.

The links that connect this period with the first may be noted : the magnificent lyrical outburst of *Romeo* is echoed in the *Merchant of Venice*, when Jessica, so like Juliet, and Lorenzo tells over again the story of their love ; Marlowe's influence appears again in Shylock, and to Marlowe, Shakespeare pays a tribute in *As You Like It :*

"Dead shephered, now I find thy saw of might,
Whoever loved not at first sight ?"

Rosalind and Celia repeat in part the story of Julia and Silvia in the *Two Gentlemen*, and the device of mistaken identity, employed in the *Dream* and the *Errors* is used again in *Twelfth Night*. For *Venus* and *Lucrece* we have the "sugared" *Sonnets*—and the sonnets strike that note of gloom and despair which prelude the Third Period of foul-racking tragedies.

Lastly, the *metrical advance* in the Second Period. The proportion of double endings increases from 8 per cent in the First Period to 11·2 per cent in the Second. Light and weak endings in the First Period are as rare as ·162 per cent ; in the Second Period they rise to ·359 per cent. The ratio between rhyme and blank verse in the First Period is as 1 : 33 ; in the Second Period it is only as 1 : 10·04.

THIRD PERIOD

To the Third Period (1601—1609) belong *Julius Caesar, Hamlet, Measure for Measure, Troilus and Cressida, Othello, Macbeth, King Lear, Antony and Cleopatra, Coriolanus, Timon of Athens*.

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In the tragedies, Shakespeare deals with the problems of life and fate, evil-doing or error or excess followed by punishment, and also the wider net spread by evil, in which the innocent are often involved, with the suggestion of a dark power which crushes down the wicked and the innocent alike. As side-issues, there are the stings of ingratitude and treachery, a *Motif* which is further worked out in his plays of the Fourth Period, with the crowning result of forgiveness and reconciliation.

In *Julius Caesar*, Caesar pays the penalty of ambition, and Bruths falls through error or want of judgment—and there is the suggestion of dark forces which man reckons without. The strain of speculation in Brutus anticipates Hamlet and in Hamlet speculation usurps the place of action. In *Hamlet* the bright and happy life of the young prince is darkened by the lust and ingratitude of his mother and eclipsed by the revelation of his ungrateful uncle's foul murder of his father. Of the dark forces that drag down the hero of Shakespeare's tragedy there is almost always an innocent woman victim : so Ophelia in *Hamlet*. *Measure for Measure* is a comedy. Against the gloom of lust and filth which touches his comedy rises, radiant as a star, the figure of the "enskyed and sainted" Isabella. In her is recaptured the breath of his earlier comedies. There is a note of stark realism in *Troilus and Cressida*. Hector alone is untouched by this realism—and Hector with his sentiment of honour and impractically recalls Brutus. In *Othello* the treachery of the trusted friend, Iago, ruins the hero and involves the innocent Desdemona in destruction, the gloom of which is only received by the idyll of the hero's winning, and wooing and wearing his pride. In *Macbeth*, Shakespeare for the first time introduces a woman who appears to be unsexed—and all for ambition. The idea of moral retribution—death of Lady Macbeth under the pangs of conscience and death of Macbeth from Macduff's sword—is nowhere more clearly worked out than in this tragedy. Then, follow the terrors and horrors of *Lear*. "Ingratitude of daughters, treachery of a son—driving fathers to despair, to madness, and to death, infidelity of a wife, plotting her husband's death, and poisoning her sister, to gratify her own lust, the heavens themselves joining in the wild storm of earthly passions"—these are at the core of the tragedy of *Lear*. *Antony and Cleopatra* is admired for its gorgeous eastern colour and the most wonderful study of a woman that Shakespeare has ever made. "In the earlier group of tragedies, from *Julius Caesar* to *Lear*, a woman is the passive confident, the helpless victim, the good angel, or the deadly foe, of the tragic hero : in the later group she becomes a companion-spirit, holding him by the spell of personality, of passion, or of blood. Sex has no part in the sinister magnetism of Lady Macbeth ; but in the "strong toil of grace" cast by Cleopatra over Antony, the magnetism of sex becomes a source of tragedy, less harrowing indeed than the tragedy of Othello or Lear, but even richer in consummate poetry. *Coriolanus* is linked, on the one hand, with *Julius Caesar* by its picture of mob-mentality and with *Lear* by portraying the self-will and pride of the

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hero. But in *Coriolanus* is struck the keynote to the plays of Fourth Period : "Thinkest thou it honourable for a noble man still to remember wrongs ?" In *Timon* there is real hardening of the soul of the hero, not by crime, but by ingratitude. He cries, "I am *misanthropos,* and hate mankind." And so he ends, "who, alive, all living men did hate."

Now the metrical advance. In the Second Period the double endings are 11·2 per cent ; in the Third Period they increase to 22·08 per cent. In the Second period the light and weak endings are ·359 per cent ; in the Third Period they increase to 1·43 per cent. The ratio of rhyme to blank verse in the Second Period is as 1 : 10·04 ; in the Third Period it is as 1 : 25·8.

FOURTH PERIOD

To the Fourth period (1609 to 1613) belong *Pericles, The Tempest, Cymbeline, The Winter's Tale, Henry VIII.* Shakespeare passes from the storm and stress of the Third Period to "a great peacefulness of light," a harmony of earth and heaven. The new notes are the notes of mercy and forgiveness, reunion and reconciliation. Two features specially distinguish the plays of the Fourth Period.

First there is a tender touch about the woman. We may contrast the women of the Third Period with the women of the Fourth Period. Portia, the gentle wife of Brutus, is lost amid plots and assassinations. Ophelia is denied her love and is drowned. Isabella, sorely tried by temptations, barely escapes ruin. Desdemona is crushed by fate against which her simple and perfect womanhood cries out in vain. Poor Lady Macduff is deserted and murdered. Cordelia is disowned, banished from her father, is wronged and slain. Chaste Octavia is wedded to Antony and deserted. Volumnia and Virgilia are made the instruments of that ruin which they sought to avert. Now that gracious tenderness environs the women of the Fourth Period : Thaisa and Marina, separated from Pericles, patient in adversity, are united at last and find happiness. Miranda, unaffected, unsophisticated, untainted by one ungenerous thought or impulse, tender, pitiful, open-hearted, so different from the Stratford-type women of Period I, the lively part and competent London-type women of Period II, the fate-stricken women of Period III, nurtured in the love and wisdom of a noble father, is at last rewarded with the love of a noble prince. Imogen, belied wronged by her husband, is at last reconciled, and forgives all who have done her harm. Hermione, disgraced and thought to be dead, suffers in silence and finally forgives the husband who has so injured her. Perdita, the fair shepherdess, fragrant with the breath of the open fields and wild flowers, lost to her kin, is found again and takes part in the joyful reunion.

Secondly, these Fourth Period plays take us back to the joys of the simple life of nature. They paint Shakespeare's Stratford life—the wild flowers of the country-side, the junketings of the rustics, the merry roguish pedlar with his fairings for the maidens, the shepherds.

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the sheep-shearing. And as the country-scenes point to Shakespeare's renewed life at Stratford, so the scenes of reconciliation between husband and wife, the love of fathers for their daughters, and their watchful care over their children's destiny, point to his renewed life with his wife Anne, and his care of his two daughters—all that then remained alive of his children.

In the Fourth Period, Shakespeare returns to his original method of construction. Instead of concentrating the action in two or three main characters, as he did in his tragedies, he intermingles them, as in the First Period, but paints them on a broader canvas, still keeping character in the forefront. In many things Shakespeare seems to return to Period I—in pictures of a country-life in the portraiture of girls, in themes like the sleeping ; but here the handling of materials is finer, characterization is deeper, charity, and forgiveness are everywhere—we seem almost to be in a new heaven and earth.

In metrical matters, the double endings to 30·3 per cent from the 22·08 per cent of Period III ; the light and weak endings increase to 5·06 per cent from the 1·43 per cent of Period III ; but the rhyme to blank verse decreases to 1 : 53·8 from the 1 : 25·8 of Period III.

Shakespeare's Self-Revelation

Shakespeare is a dramatist, and a dramatist does not lay bare his soul in his plays. The idea of getting at the soul of Shakespeare through his plays will be resented by many critics. The drama is an "objective" art ; the less said about the dramatist's self-revelation, the better. As a matter of fact, the dramatist conceals his self behind his characters—and particularly in the case of Shakespeare who has created such a bewildering variety of characters, no two being alike, his personality, if he has reflected it in any of his characters, is absolutely elusive. Yet Professor J. Dover Wilson claims to have discovered the "Essential Shakespeare" in his interesting study of the problems. His book is the high watermark of tne "subjective" interpretation of Shakespeare. We need not go the whole hog with Professor Wilson, but we may accept the reasoned conclusion of Leslie Stephen. And here is Leslie Stephen's summing up of the case.

"A dramatist no more able than anybody else to bestow upon his character talents which he does not himself possess. If—as critics are agreed—Shakespeare's characters show humour. Shakespeare must have sense of humour himself. When Mercutio indulges in the wonderful tirade upon Queen Mab, or Jaques moralizes in the forest, we learn that their creator had certain powers of mind just as clearly as if we were reading a report of one of the wild combats at the "Mermaid." It is harder to define those qualities precisely than to say what is implied by Johnson's talk at the "Mitre," but the idiosyncrasy is at least as strongly impressed upon such characteristic mental displays, If we were to ask any critic whether such passages could be attributed to Marlowe or Ben Jonson, he would enquire whether we took him for a fool. If we were considering a bit of purely scientific exposition, the inference to character would not exist.

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A mathematician, I suppose, could tell me that the demonstration of some astronomical theorem was in Newton's manner, and the remark would not show whether Newton was amiable or spiteful, jealous or generous. But a man's humour and fancy are functions of his character as well as of his reason. To appreciate them clearly is to know how he feels as well as how he argues : what are the aspects of life which specially impress him, and what morals are most congenial. I do not see how the critic can claim an instinctive perception of the Shakespearen mode of thought without a preception of some side of his character. You distinguish Shakespeare's work from his rivals, as confidently as any expert judging of handwriting. You admit, too, that you can give a very fair account of the characteristics of the other writers. Then surely you can tell me—or at least you know "implicitly" what is the quality in which they are defective and Shakespeare pre-eminent.

"Half my knowledge of a friend's character is derived from his talk, and not the less if it is playful, ironical and dramatic. When we agree that Shakespeare's mind was vivid and subtle that he shows a unique power of blending the tragic and the comic, we already have some indications of character ; and incidentally we catch revelations of more specific peculiarities. Part of my late reading was a charming book in which Mr. Justice Medden sets forth Shakespeare's accurate knowledge of field-sports. It seems to prove conclusively a proposition against which there can certainly be no presumption. We may be quite confident that he could thoroughly enjoy a day's coursing on the Cotswold Hills and we know by the most undeniable proof that his sense of humour was by tickled by the oddities of his fellow-sportsmen, the Shallows and Slenders. It is at least equally clear that he had the keenest enjoyment of charms of the surrounding scenery. He could not have written *Midsummer Night's Dream or As You Like It,* if the poetry of the English greenwood had not entered into his soul. The single phrase about the daffodils—so often quoted for its magical power—is poor enough, if there were no other, of a nature exquisitely sensitive to the beauties of flowers and of spring time. It wants again, no such confirmation as Fuller's familiar anecdote to convince us that he could listen to and probably join in, a catch by Sir Toby Belch, or make Lord Southampton laugh as heartily as Prince Hall laughed at the jests of Falstaff. Shakespeare, again as this suggests, was certainly not a Puritan. That may be inferred by judicious critics from particular phrases or from the relation of Puritans to players in general, But without such reasoning we may go further and say that the very conception of a Puritan Shakespeare involves a contradiction in terms. He represents, of course in the fullest degree, the type which is just the antithesis of Puritanism; the large and tolerant acceptance of human nature which was intolerable to the rigid and strait laced fanatics, whom, nevertheless, may forgive in consideration of their stern morality. People, indeed, have argued, very fruitlessly I fancy, as to Shakespeare's religious beliefs. Critics tell us and I have no doubt truly, that it would be impossible to show conclusively from his work whether he considered himself to

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be an Anglican or Catholic. But a man's real religion is not to be defined by the formula he accepts or inferred from the Church to which he belongs. His outward profession is chiefly a matter of accident and circumstance, not of character. We may, I think, be pretty certain that Shakespeare's religion, whatever may have been in its external form, included a profound sense of the mystery of the world and of the pettiness of the little lives that are rounded by a sleep ; a conviction that we are such stuff as dreams are made of and a constant sense such as is impressed in the most powerful sonnets that our present life is an infinitesmal moment in the vast, "abysm" of eternity. Shakespeare, we know, read Montaigne ; and if, like Montaigne, he accepted the Papist divines, he would clearly not have escaped the creed in which he was brought up, he would have sympathised in Montaigne's sceptical and humorous view of theological controversialists playing their fantastic tricks of logic before high Heaven. Undoubtedly, he despised a pedant, and the pedantry which displayed itself in the wranglings of Protestants. Critics, again, have disputed as to Shakespeare's politics ; and the problem is complicated by the desire to show that his politics were as good as his poetry. Sound Liberals are unwilling to admit that he had aristocratic tendencies, because they hold that all aristocrats are wicked and narrow-minded. It is, of course, an anachronism to transplant new problems to those days, and we cannot say that Shakespeare would have thought of modern applications of the principles which he accepted. But I do not see how any man could have been more clearly what may be called an intellectual aristocrat. His contempt for the mob may be good-humoured enough, but is surely unequivocal : from the Portrait of Jack Cade, promising, like a good Socialist, that the three-hooped pot shall have ten hoops, to the first, second and third citizens who give a display of their insanity and instability in *Coriolanus* or *Julius Caesar.* Shakespeare may be speaking dramatically through Ulysses in *Troilus and Cressida* ; but at least he must have fully appreciated the argument for order ; and understood by order that the cultivated and intelligent should rule and the common herd have as little direct voice in state affairs as Elizabeth and James could have desired.

"When we have got so far, we have already, as it seems to me, admitted certain attributes, which are as much personal as literary. If you admit that Shakespeare was a humorist, intensively sensitive to natural beauty, a scorner of the pedantry, whether of scholars or theologians, endowed with an amazingly wide and tolerant view of human nature radically opposed to Puritanism or any kind of fanaticism, and capable of hearty sympathy with the popular instincts and yet with a strong persuasion of the depth of popular folly, you inevitably affirm at least some negative propositions about the man himself. You can say with confidence what are the characteristics which were thoroughly antipathetic to him even though it may be difficult to describe accurately the characteristics which he positively embodied.

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"Another point is, it would seem, too plain to need much emphasis. The author of *Romeo and Juliet* was, I suppose, capable of Romeo's passion. We may doubt that the sun is fire but can hardly doubt that Shakespeare could love. In this case, it seems to me the power of intuition is identical with the emotional power. A man could surely have been unable to find the most memorable utterance in literature of passions of which he was not himself abnormally susceptible. It may be right to describe a poet's power as marvellous, but why should we hold it to be miraculous ? I agree with Pope's common-sense remark about Helosia's "well sung woes' he best can paint 'em who can feel 'em most. Surely that is the obvious explanation, and I am unable to see why there should be any difficulty in receiving it."

Shakespeare's Learning : His Sources

In the prologue to *Volpone*, Ben Jonson wrote : "Tis known, five weeks fully pen'd it : From his own hand, without a coadjutor, Novice, journey man, or tutor," and this claim to have written his masterpiece so quickly without assistance emphasises a dominant condition of work in the Elizabethan theatre and a resulting practice. The repertory system and competition between the companies, as well as the limited number of theatre-goers, demanded a regular supply of fresh plays ; rapidity of composition was essential, and a natural result was collaboration. Henslowe's accounts often show three or four, or even five poets, working together on one play.

The urgent needs of theatre encouraged the poets to lay their hands on all likely matter for drama. The more scholarly among them made use of their wide reading. *Tamburlaine* shows that Marlowe's knowledge of history and geography was extensive, and Johnson having inserted in *Catiline* long translated extracts from Cicero's speeches, retorted upon his critics : "Though you commend the first two acts, with the people, because they are the worst ; and dislike the oration of Cicero, in regard you read some pieces of it at school and understand it not yet ; yet I shall find the way to forgive you." Other dramatists chose more popular sources.

It is necessary to start with something about the amount of Shakespeare's learning. Professor T. W. Baldwin in his monumental volumes has given us a clear idea of the kind of education Shakespeare would have followed at petty school and a grammar school. There is no real reason to doubt that he attended both. As he somewhere acquired the equivalent knowledge, but it is possible that because of the financial crisis in his father's fortunes, he did not complete the full curriculum. He acquired a reasonable knowledge of Latin, and perhaps a slight knowledge of Greek.

The extent of Shakespeare's classical learning is nevertheless still a matter of dispute. Some (including J. A. K. Thomson, Jonn Dover Wilson, and F. P. Wilson, believe that Jonson's "little Latin and less Greek' should be taken to mean hardly any "Latin and no Greek." Others think that though Shakespeare had little or no Greek, he

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understood Latin 'pretty well,' and that his knowledge or language was small only in comparison with Jonson's (Edgar I. Fripp).

Shakespeare used translations where they were available ; but he did not use them slavishly, and there is plenty of evidence that he read Latin works of which there was no translation—two plays by Plautus, Buchanan, Leslie, some of Livy, and (if we are to believe E. Honigmann) two manuscript chronicles about King John. He knew some Virgil in the original, though he could have read the translations of Douglas, Surrey, Phaer, Stanyhurst. There is some evidence that he knew Erasmus's *Colloquis* and *Adagia*. The strongest argument in favour of Shakespeare's having had a fluent knowledge of Latin is afforded by his coinages. Occasionally, he blunders as when he uses 'orifex' for 'orifice' ; but his coinages, or those reputed to be his, generally show both knowledge and tact.

Of modern languages, Shakespeare acquired some knowledge of French, Italian, and perhaps a smattering of Spanish. He was not a learned man of the conventional type, but he had enough education for his needs ; and he uses what he read with a masterly ease and assurance. He may, of course, have read hundreds of books which have left no trace on his writings ; but the most unlikely books did leave their traces. Like Coleridge, he created much of his poetry from forgotten reading.

The influence of certain books on Shakespeare's work has been examined in detail. The Bible left its mark on every play in the canon, and, as Richmond Noble has shown, the earlier echoes are mostly from the Bishops' Bible and the latter ones mostly from the Geneva version.

The Ovidian influence is also pervasive, particularly in the earlier plays (E. I. Fripp). Florio's Montaigne affected both thought and vocabulary (G. C. Taylor). The *Mirror of Magistrates* is echoed in the Histories, in *King Lear* and in *Cymbeline*." The influence of *Homilies* has been traced in several plays (A. Hart). There are echoes from Harsnet's *Declaration* not only in *Lear*, but also in *The Tempest*. It would be possible to trace the influence of many other books on Shakespeare's work though the majority of these echoes may do little else than exhibit the working of his sub-conscious mind, and the extent of his reading.

It is certain that as an actor he was acquainted with a large number of plays in which he performed. He knew many, if not all, of Marlowe's work. He echoes *Tamburlaine*, *Dido*, and *Edward II* ; he quotes from *Faustus* ; and he quotes from and echoes *Hero and Leander*. But his debt to Marlowe was more profound ; from him he learnt the art of blank verse and developed his own conception of tragedy.

From Greene's *Friar Bacon* and *James IV*, Shakespeare may have learnt something about the interweaving of several plots and there is evidence that he knew *Menaphon*, *Euphues' Censure to Philautus*, and the coney-catching pamphlets as well as *Pandasto*

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the source of *The Winter's Tale*. Lodge provided the plot of *As You Like It*, but Shakespeare appears to have been little influenced by his poems or play.

It is not too much to say that every characteristic of Shakespearean comedy, except the skilful blending of prose and verse is to be found in Lyly. Farcical scenes like those between the Dromios, between Moth, Armado and Costerd, between the Launce and Speed, and between Launcelot and old Gobbo ; wit contests between persons of rank, Boyet and the French ladies, Portia and Nerissa, Beatrice and Benedick ; the use of parallel plots, the use of song, the pastoral spirit of *As You Like It*, the introduction of fairies, and the disguising of girls as boys, these are a few of the dramatic devices which Shakespeare learned from Lyly. But his indebtedness is more profound, though less tangible, in the creation of atmosphere. The world of Shakespearean comedy is fundamentally the same as Lyly's. The conventions, the style, the very air we breathe is the same. There can be no doubt that Shakespeare's comedies would have been very different had not Lyly preceded him. Not only was Shakespeare generally indebted to his forerunner but more than fifty specific borrowings have been pointed out. Furthermore, Shakespeare learned for Lyly how to write prose, and though in *1 Henry IV* he poked fun at the excesses of Euphuism, he remained to the end of his career profoundly affected by it. The civilized prose of the great comedies owes in its constructions its rhythms, its balance and its poise to the example of Lyly. It sharpened the edge of Shakespeare's wit, and gave his dialogue more bite and sparkle. Touchstone, Falstaff and Beatrice use a modified form of the style in which its inherent artificiality is toned down.

There is some evidence that Shakespeare had read some of the Nashe-Harvey controversy, as it left its traces on *Love's Labour's Lost ;* but one of Nashe's pamphlets, *Pierce Penilesse* seems to have considerable influence on *Hamlet*. There are a few phrases in *Othello* too that recall *Pierce Penilesse*.

Ben Jonson mentioned that Shakespeare surpassed 'sporting Kyd' ; and certainly *The Spanish Tragedy* and possibly an earlier version of *Hamlet* were among the most fruitful of the works of the University Wits in their influence on his plays. He also seems to have known *Cornelio* and he alludes to *Soliman and Perseda*.

Shakespeare had read *Faerie Queene*, but its influence on his own work was surprisingly small. He knew most of Sidney's works —*Astrophel and Stella*. *The Defence of Poesy* and *Arcadia*—and much of Daniel's, including *Delia*, *Rosamund*, *A Letter from Octavia*, *Cleopatra* and *The Civil Wars*.

So many books and plays have not survived that even if we read all the extant books published before 1616 we could still be sure that we had not read all the books known to Shakespeare ; and of course, some ideas or phrases apparently echoed from books, we know, may in fact be echoed from books which are now lost. Even apart from this, some resemblance my be coincidental ; Shakespeare may have

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derived the word, the phrase, the image or the idea from a variety of sources—from conversation, from dictionaries, from manuscripts, from letters. He combined a variety of different sources in the texture of his verse, and the process, in most cases, was unconscious.

We are on surer ground when we attempt to trace the source of his plots, though even here there are obstacles in the way. In a number of cases, *e. g.*, *Hamlet*, *Two Gentlemen of Verona*, *Merry Wives*—there was probably a lost source-play. The Histories present a special problem, since there is no much disagreement about the materials on which Shakespeare worked. Some years ago, it appeared to be settled that the second and third parts of *Henry VI* were Shakespeare's unaided work ; now it is suggested either that the *Contention* and the *Two Tragedies* were used by him as sources or else that these were, like Shakespeare's plays derived from the work of previous dramatists. It used to be generally accepted that *King John* was based on the *Troublesome Raigne*, but the latest editor, Honigmann, assumes that the position of the two plays was reversed, the *Troublesome Raigne* being based on *King John*. There was possibly a source-play behind *Richard II* : so it is unprofitable to discuss whether Shakespeare consulted a number of remoter sources. *Henry IV* and *Henry V* were derived in part from the *Famous Victories*, a play which exists only in a mangled and truncated version, so that we cannot know exactly what Shakespeare borrowed from it. The authencity of *I Henry IV* and *Henry VIII* is still a matter of dispute, and till we can be sure how much Peele and others wrote of the former and how much, if any, Fletcher wrote of the latter, the discussion of their sources will be inconclusive. *Richard III* is only one of the Histories which presents a straightforward problem.

Shakespeare's method of composition differed from play to play. For one or two no direct source has been discovered. For several of his plots, Shakespeare appears to have used only one source (*e. g.*, *As You Like It* and *The Winter's Tale*) Most of the plays, however, have more than one source, and several of them draw on a variety of sources.

It cannot be said that Shakespeare never invented a plot, as that of *Love's Labour's Lost* at least may have been his own invention. Nor can it be mentioned that he invariably used an earlier play, though G. A. Green has tried to show that for 22 of his plays, Shakespeare made use of an earlier play, and that for only two of his plays no source-play has been suggested. Green plausibly argues that whenever possible Shakespeare used translations, and much less plausibly, that he may not have been able to read Italian, French, Greek, or Latin. This view is quite untenable. Baldwin rightly disclaims any responsibility for the idea that Shakespeare was a learned man : but readers of his several volumes will allow that the poet absorbed a fair amount of education.

No one disputes that for five of his plays : *Measure for Measure*, *Henry IV*, *Henry V*, and *Lear*, Shakespeare made some use of an earlier play ; but it is certain that even for these he used other sources

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as well. There is not a single play that can be shown to have merely a dramatic source, though it may be admitted that the loss of so many Elizabethan plays makes it possible to argue that all, or nearly all. Shakespeare's plays may have had a dramatic source.

It would be satisfying to be able to show that just as Shakespeare's work falls into several periods in respect of versification, characterization and imagery, so in respect of sources, it shows a characteristic development from the simple to the complex, or from the complex to the simple, but there is nothing to support such a theory.

It seems probable that more sources will eventually be discovered, though such discoveries are unlikely to lead to radical modifications of our knowledge of Shakespeare's methods of work. He naturally followed the methods of imitation which he had learnt at school, and his genius was displayed more in the imaginative fusion of details from different sources than in pure invention in the modern sense. How conscious the process of fusion was must remain a matter of opinion.

The study of Shakespeare's source is no substitute for criticism The sources throw relatively little light on the finished plays. Though now and again, when the interpretation of a passage is disputable, the knowledge of a source may show us which interpretation is the more likely. There are other occasions when the knowledge that Shakespeare deviated from his known sources will cause us to ask questions which may lead to a true interpretation of the play. But apart from such a limited use of source-study as an adjunct to criticism, it may be justified on wider grounds. Anything which throws light, however dim, on Shakespeare's craftsmanship or on his methods of composition is not without interest, and stands in no need of defence.

(Adapted from Kenneth Muir : Shakespeare's Sources).

Shakespeare—Criticism

No good writer, as Landor says, was ever long neglected, no great man overlooked by men equally great. There is abundant proof of the esteem in which Shakespeare was held in his own day. He was recognized as the greatest of them all. His writings were confessed to be "such as neither Man, nor Muse can prise too much." His contemporaries had never any doubt of his greatness.

Of the contemporary comment upon Shakespeare is that of Ben Jonson which is best remembered and most quoted ; and with justice, as Jonson not only had the finest critical mind of his day, but as a dramatist and poet he is so different a kind from Shakespeare that his opinion has a peculiar interest. Ben Jonson spoke of Shakespeare's works with something of the consolation that comes from superior scholarship ; just as the sense of contrast with Shakespeare also made him pride himself on the originality and construction of his plots. But no nobler tribute will ever be paid to a friend than the verses of this warm-hearted burly rival 'to the memory of my beloved, the Author, Mr. William Shakespeare, and what he hath left us.' Shakespeare is admitted to have surpassed the Greeks and

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Latin dramatists, Jonson's own masters ; he was not of an age, but for all time, and he had excelled not merely because he was the poet of nature, but by reason of his art. In private conversation, Jonson is known to have said that Shakespeare 'wanted art,' meaning thereby that he did not always take sufficient care, and Jonson has some responsibility for the statement to be found again and again, in varied words, in later critics, that there was more art in his work and more nature in Shakespeare's. It is therefore important to note, that in his most deliberate testimony to the genius of Shakespeare he acknowledged him to have been master of an art which no one else could reach. With all his faults Shakespeare was to Jonson the greatest of dramatists. This was the contemporary view and it was never seriously challenged throughout the seventeenth century.

The criticism of Shakespeare which deliberately discusses principles and determines merits begins with Dryden. Whenever Dryden mentions Shakespeare, his opinion must be treated with respect. And in particular, in weighing Dryden's opinions, we must spend some time over his collection of Shakespeare and Fletcher. We must try to come to a point of understanding at which we see why it was natural and proper for him to make this frequent parallel and comparison. That is not so much a matter of wide reading or scholarship, although we must make ourselves very familiar with the plays of Fletcher, and with the plays, as well as the criticism of Dryden ; it is a matter of the exercise of the critical imagination.

A dramatist himself, with a happy faculty of meeting and guiding the public taste, he was compelled to review the many problems of dramatic art that have been forced into prominence since Shakespeare's death. The Elizabethans, by the mere lapse of half a century, had come to appear somewhat antiquated ; and pride in the great national tradition could not conceal its exhaustion. The old life had gone from it at the very time when the French drama, following other methods, was attaining its highest perfection. There were scholars who, like Milton in *Samson Agonistes*, went back to the Greek models. Yet other methods were found in the Spanish plays, which were well-known and even occasionally acted. The very stage had altered, with the introduction of movable scenery and the substitution of women for the Elizabethan boy-actors. The whole theory of the drama demanded scrutiny by dramatists and critics alike, and Shakespeare had to be tested by what had been achieved under different conditions elsewhere.

Dryden, with his sense of abstract form, could not bring himself to a complete surrender to the genius of Shakespeare. Dryden was the leader of the Neo-classical movement. Neo-classic criticism was guided by abstract rules of form. Neo-classic criticism wanted clarity and simplicity rather than complexity and subtlety that smacked of mystery. The effect of imagination lifts you up to a higher level of existence and the effect of reason keeps you bound to the solid earth. Dryden, the man of reason, could not be expected to appreciate Shakespeare.

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Dryden felt clearly that Shakespeare had penetration into the heart of reality. He realised that Shakespeare "comprehended all characters and passions." Being a poet, he realised quite well the greatness of Shakespeare. Yet as a critic, who believed in the Neo-classic principles, he could not accept Shakespeare as a model to be followed.

In general, Shakespeare was considered to have reached his goal by dangerous routes which he need not have taken. But the construction of his plays was not the only point at issue. The language of the Elizabethans was not old-fashioned, and the men of the Restoration were too ready to discover in it impropriety or meanness of expression. They also made the common mistake of assuming that the changes in the models of wit were refinements. 'The wit of the last age,' said Dryden, 'was yet more incorrect than their language.' Of Shakespeare, who had not neglected the taste of his audience and was always a rapid writer he had to say that 'he is many times flat, insipid : his comic wit degenerating into clenches, his serious swelling into bombast.' Dryden's charges against Shakespeare were : (i) Inequality of Shakespeare's plays ; (ii) that Shakespeare is full of bombasts ; (iii) that Shakespeare's language is obscure ; (iv) that Shakespeare's plays had looseness of construction and some improbabilities.

Thomas Rymer was a man of considerable learning and not destitute of taste, when he "left his taste to look after itself" ; but a false theory of what drama should be, of what he *ought* to like, came very near to paralysing that function altogether, and made him the butt of his own and subsequent times. All his life, he was entirely out of sympathy with the modern drama, in France as well as in England. He held that the English should have built on the same foundation of Sophocles and Euripides, or after their model, and that the chorus was the most necessary part of tragedy. He was clever and boisterously witty, but when he attacked *Othello* with ridicule he knew that it was his last weapon. He called it the 'Tragedy of the Handkerchief,' he found in it the moral that wives should look well to their linen and he summed up his censures thus : "There is in this play, some burlesque, some humour, and ramble of Comical Wit, some show, and some mimicry to divert the spectators; but the tragical part is plainly none other than a Bloody Farce, without salt or sour."

As soon as we enter the eighteenth century we feel a change in the atmosphere of criticism and in reading the criticism itself we are aware that Shakespeare is beginning to be more read than seen upon the stage. Addison calls attention to a point of detail (the crowing of the cock in *Hamlet*) which has probably, we feel, struck him rather in the reading than at a performance ; the attention of the 18th century critic in England is rather on the poetry than on the drama. The observations of Pope are of value and interest, because they are by Pope. If other eighteenth century critics are to be read, it is not so much for their individual contributions as a reminder

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that there was no period in which Shakespeare fell into neglect. There is indeed some development. Shakespeare begins to be written about in general detail and at greater length, and apart from any more general discussion of the drama, he is, in the 18th century, gradually "detached" from his environment, from the other dramatists and from a time which had become unfamiliar. Progress of far-reaching importance was made in other directions. This period gave us, in the introduction to Rowe's edition, the first biography of Shakespeare, it discussed the extent of his learning and the sources of his plots notably in Whalley's *Enquiry into the Learning of Shakespeare* (1748). Farmer's *Essay on the Learning of Shakespeare* (1767) and Charlotte Lennox's *Shakespeare Illustrated* (1753) ; above all, it began the examination of the texts of the plays and the explanation of their difficulties.

To pass from Dryden to Johnson is to make the journey from one oasis to another. After the critical essays of Dryden, the Preface to Shakespeare by Samuel Johnson is the text of the great pieces of criticism to read.

Dr. Johnson was the exponent of common-sense in life and literature. That is the merit and the defect of the criticism of Shakespeare. Johnson describes Shakespeare's plays as "compositions of a distinct kind"—not comedies, histories, or tragedies. In this connection, Johnson makes another most remarkable (but not sufficiently remarked, observation : "The players who in their edition divided our author's works into comedies, histories, and tragedies, seem not to have defined the three kinds by any very exact or definite ideas." To those who would divide periods, and segregate men, beat into classical and romantic group. T. S. Eliot commends the study of this sentence, and of what Johnson says afterwards about the relation of the comic. This Preface to Shakespeare was published in 1765, and Voltaire, still writing ten years and more after this event was maintaining an opposite point of view. Johnson saw deeper than Voltaire, in this as in most matters. Johnson perceived, though not explicitly, that the distinctions of tragic and comic are superficial—for us ; though he did not know that they sprang from a difference in ritual. As a poet—and he was a fine poet—Johnson is at the end of a tether. But as a critic—and he was greater as critic than as poet —Johnson has a place comparable to that of Cawley as poet.

Johnson says : "In tragedy he often writes, with great appearance of toil and study, what is written at last with little felicity ; but, in his comic scenes, he seems to produce, without labour, what no labour can improve." And T. S. Eliot comments : "This is an opinion which we cannot lightly dismiss. Johnson is quite aware that the alternation of 'tragic' and 'comic' is something more than an alternation ; he perceives that something different and new is produced. 'The interchanges of mingled scenes seldom fall to produce the intended vicissitudes of passion." Through all these denominations of the drama, Shakespeare's mode of composition is the same But why should Johnson have thought that Shakespeare's comic parts

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were spontaneous, and that his tragic parts were laboured ? Here, it seems to me, Johnson, by his simple integrity in being wrong has happened upon some truth much deeper than he knew. For those who have experiencedthe full horror of life, tragedy is still inadequate. Sophocles felt more of it than he could express, when he wrote *Oedipus the King* : Shakespeare when he wrote *Hamlet* ; and Shakespeare had the advantage of being able to employ his gravediggers. In the end, horror and laughter have become as horrible and-laughable as they can be ; and—whatever the conscious intention of the authors—you may laugh or shudder over *Oedipus* or *Hamlet* or *Lear* —or both at once : then only do you perceive that the aim of the comic and the tragic dramatist is the same : they are equally serious ..... All this is suggested to me by the words of Samuel Johnson .....What Plato perceived has not been noticed by subsequent dramatic critics ; the dramatic poet uses the conventions of tragic and comic poetry, so far as these are the conventions of his day ; there is potential comedy in Sophocles and potential tragedy in Aristophanes and otherwise they would not be such good tragedians or comedians as they are. It might be added that when you have comedy and tragedy, united in the wrong way, or separated in the wrong way, you get sentiment of amusement. The distinction between the tragic and the comic is on account of the way in which we try to live ; when we get below it, as in *Lear*, we have an account of the way in which we do live.

Johnson refutes those critics who had thought that Shakespeare violated propriety, here and there, with his observation that Shakespeare's 'scenes are occupied only by men, who act and think Shakespeare committed' any sin by breaking the rules of the Unities. Verisimilitude, says Johnson, is the object of the Unities. Delusion, he says, is the essence of drama. If one fiction—the actor as the character impersonated can be accepted, he asked, why cannot other fictions be accepted. That is the sound common-sense approach to literature.

"We must confess the faults of our favourite," he explained in a letter to Charles Burney, "to gain credit to our praise of his excellencies." The passage on the carelessness and inequalities, the quibbles and idle conceits, is remarkably searching, and may here and there be too strongly worded. It gives the impression that Johnson, in his scrupulous regard for truth, had tried to say the very worst that a judicious admirer could ever be forced to admit. The same reasoned impartiality which led to describe the faults also compelled him to pronounce as high a eulogy as has ever been written on this side of idolatry : "This therefore, is the praise of Shakespeare, that he who has mazed his imagination, in following the phantoms which other writers raise up before him, may here be cured of his delicious ecstasies by reading human sentiments in human language ; by scenes from which a hermit may estimate the transactions of the world, and a confessor predict the progress of the passions." Nothing could have been better than Johnson's Preface as a balanced estimate.

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Morgan's Essays *On the Dramatic Character of Sir John Falstaff* is the first conspicuous members of a long line on criticism dealing with the characters of the personage in the plays, considering not only their actions within the play itself, but inferring from their behaviours on the stage what their general character is, that is to say, how they would behave in other circumstances. The book grew under Morgan's hands till it became more than its title promised—not merely a vindication of Falstaff's courage, but an enthusiastic exposition of the genius of Shakespeare as revealed in the minute examination of a single character. This type of criticism initiated by Morgan, reached its most precise stage in Bradley.

The first of great German critics, Lessing, tended to make of Shakespeare almost a national issue, for was it he who affirmed that English literature, and in particular Shakespeare's was more congenial than French literature and drama to the German taste. The German critics in general insist upon the naturalness and fidelity to reality of Shakespeare's plays. Harder, a critic of considerable understanding, begins to appreciate the existence of something like a poetic pattern, in calling attention to the fitness between the passions of the personages and the scenery in which these passions are enacted. Neglecting the circumstances in which the plays are written—and indeed the historical information was not available—and paying little attention to their dramatic merits, the Germans, concentrated their attention chiefly upon the philosophical significance of character. They penetrate to a deeper level than that of the simple moral values attributed to great literature by earlier times, and foreshadow 'the criticism of life' definition by Arnold. Furthermore, it is not until this period that an element of 'mystery' is recognised in Shakespeare. That is one gift of the Romantic Movement to Shakespeare's criticism, and one for which, with all its excesses, we have reason to be grateful. It is hardly too much to say that German critics and Coleridge by their criticism of Shakespeare, radically altered the reflective attitude of criticism towards poetry.

In the interval between Morgan and Coleridge that best work on Shakespeare was one by the scholars, such as Steevens and Malone, who contributed to the elucidation of the text so great a wealth of linguistic, antiquarian, and bibliographical knowledge that later research has done little than supplement it.

Hazlitt's *Characters of Shakespeare's Plays* (1817) was the first book in which the criticism of the century spoke clearly and confidently. But Coleridge had already been lecturing on Shakespeare for several years ; and Lamb had written his magazine article on the Tragedies of Shakespeare.

These critics were possessed with all the joy of a discovery. The differences from earlier critics are obvious at a glance. There is the greater freedom of movement, the clearer signs of real pleasure in writing or speaking about Shakespeare. Enthusiasm is not checked by the desire to strike balance ; there is no longer any fear of being misled by superstitious veneration. 'These critics did not hold with

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Johnson that it was necessary to confess faults in order to gain credit to their praise of excellences. They did not pass judgment ; they gave an interpretation. They held in Hazlitt's words, that a genuine criticism should reflect the colours, the light and shade, the soul and body of a work. The great question they set themselves to answer was not how far has Shakespeare succeeded but how is Shakespeare to be understood. The plays are regarded as embodiments of real life ; the characters are treated as fellow-beings of whom the plays preserve our only record. There is none of the aloofness which must accompany the judicial attitude of watching the craftsman at his work and noting the varying results. Johnson's main interest was in Shakespeare the man ; the business of 19th century critics was with the world of his creation. When they studied the ordered development of his art and demonstrated its unity, their attitude was the philosopher's in describing the phases of a great phenomenon in nature. It is nothing if not reverential and intuitively sympathetic. It opens new vistas and communicates a sense of exaltation and wonder.

Coleridge, the most important of them all, regards poetry as idealization of life. With his faith in the concept of 'organic form,' he thinks, "Shakespeare's judgement was equal to his genius" ; the form of his drama comes from the nature of the drama itself. Coleridge helped to free Shakespearean criticism from a bondage of narrow didacticism. Coleridge makes the following important points : (i) the interest of Shakespeare's plays is independent of plot and story ; the interest centres in character ; (ii) therefore, Shakespeare lays more emphasis on expectations than on surprise ; if the character is known, his actions will also be foreseen ; (iii) juxtaposition of opposites ; Polonius in *Hamlet* is a peculiar mixture of two irreconcilables, wisdom and folly ; Dogberry the fool behaves like a wise man in *Much Ado ;* (iv) Shakespeare kept the high road of life ; (v) interfusion of the lyric ; (vi) the characters are to be inferred ; they are not described.

Psychological criticism derives from Coleridge with his emphasis on character. Poetic criticism is anticipated by Coleridge. Historical criticism is initiated by Coleridge. As Eliot observes : "Hazlitt, Lamb and De Quincey do but make a constellation about the primary star of Coleridge. Their work is chiefly important as reinforcing the influence of Coleridge." Lamb enunciated the principle that Shakespeare's plays are for the study. Bradley completed the Coleridge tradition in Shakespeare's criticism.

Once the chronology of the plays had been established in its main outlines, the task of tracing Shakespeare's growth to maturity, his summits of achievement and in general the pattern of his creative career, was facilitated. In England, William Spalding, Charles Knight and Henry Hallam, and in Germany Hermann Ulrici and G. G. Gervinus, were the chief builders of a Shakespeare whose pattern of growth could be traced in well-marked successive periods. In David Masson, in 1865, we get the first glimpses of the sentimental 'final mood of reconciliation' theory. Dowden's *Shakespeare : His Mind*

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and Art (1875) is the first book in English to give anything like a unified and rounded picture of the whole achievement of the dramatist. Dowden and Furnivall went all out on the 'four period doctrine' and though their sentimentality, and their belief in Shakespeare's doctrine of female sweetness and purity soon earned the label of gush from more sober critics, it is this sentimental picture which still too largely holds the field in orthodox circles. Hand in hand with sentiment concerning Shakespeare's female characters, but in keeping with the scientific movement of the later century, went hard-headed investigation, into the statistics of Shakespeare's versification, and exact measuring of his artistic process.

The historical school, led by Stoll, considers Shakespeare's play as a part and project of the dramatic tradition. Stoll suggests that Shakespeare had no interest beyond that of telling story. The plays are often based on popular conventions—*Othello* on the convention of Calumniator Believed, *Hamlet* Revenge of Murder, *Henry IV* on the Braggart Exposed, *Merchant of Venice* on the Jew Baited.

One of the chief critical occupations of this century was the building up of a picture of Shakespeare's personality. In their different ways Dowden, Brandes Frank Harris, and even James Joyce in the brilliant debate in *Ulysses* have attempted the task.

G. Wilson Knight is concerned primarily with the analysis of poetic symbolism, the interpretation of the plays in relation to each other and what he calls the Shakespearean progress, and the subordination of character to the poetic meaning of the play. He enunciates his principle like this : in a drama, we are interested in the squence of Time ; that is how we can understand plot and character ; to reach the inner layer of meaning, you have to give up temporal perception, and accept spatial perception : then you have the proper inter-animation of words, phrases and symbols.

The function of imagery has been studied by a number of modern critics. Caroline Spurgeon tabulated and classified the images in Shakespeare and hit upon predominant images in particular plays, to arrive at the furniture of Shakespeare's mind. Wolfgang Clemen tried to show the dramatic appropriateness of the images. If Spurgeon was more interested in the content of the images, Clemen is more interested in the form of the images.

Shakespeare has been studied in relation to his age and theatre by Thorndike, W. W. Lawrence, Farnham, O. J. Campbell, Schuking Tillyard, Hardin Craig, Theodore Spencer, G. B. Harrison, John Dover Wilson, Lily B. Campbell, Ruth L. Anderson, and Sir Edmund Chambers, Kenneth Muir, Baldwin, Noble, Fripp, G. G. Taylor and others have considered the extent of Shakespeare's learning, his sources and their relation to and influence on Shakespeare's plays. Shakespeare's craftsmanship has been studied by Moulton, Granville Barker, and Quiller-Couch.

After the contributions of Pollard, Greg, Adams, and Robertson, in the field of textual studies, correction and amendations, the New

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Cambridge editors are doing useful service under the able and conscientious guidance of John Dover Wilson.

[Articles by T. S. Eliot, J. Isaacs, D. Nichol Smith, Anne Ridler and Kenneth Muir have been used in the preparation of this section on Shakespearean Criticism].

Shakespeare's Genius—As a Poet and Dramatist

Universality

"And such was Shakespeare, whose strong soul could climb
Steeps of sheer terrors, sound the ocean grand
Of passions deep, or over Fancy's strand
Trip with his fairies, keeping step and time.
His too the power to laugh out full and clear,
With unembittered joyance, and to move
Along the silent, shadowy paths of love
As tenderly as Dante, whose austere
Stern spirit through the worlds below, above,
Unsmiling strode ; to tell the tidings here."

—*W. W. Story.*

"Shakespeare's work alone can be said to possess the organic strength and infinite variety, the troubling fulness, vital complexity, and breathing truth of Nature herself. In points of artistic resource and technical ability—such as copious and expressive diction, freshness and pregnancy of verbal combination, richly modulated verse, and structural skill in the handling of incident and action—Shakespeare's supremacy is indeed sufficiently assured. But, after all, it is of course, in the spirit and substance of his work, his power of piercing to the hidden centres of character of touching the deepest spring of impulse and passion, out of which emerge the issues of life, and of evolving those issues dramatically with a flawless strength, subtlety, and truth, which raises him so immensely above and beyond not only the best of the play-wrights who went before him, but the whole line of illustrious dramatists that came after him. It is Shakespeare's unique distinction that he has an absolute command over all the complexities of thought and feeling that prompt action and bring out the dividing lines of character. He sweeps with the hand of a master the whole gamut of human experience from the lowest note to the very top of its compass, from the sportive childish treble of Mamilius, and the pleading boyish tones of Prince Arthur, up to the spectre-haunted terrors of Macbeth, the tropical passion of Othello, the-agonised sense and torture spirit of Hamlet, the sustained elemental grandeur, the Titanic force, the utterly tragical pathos of King Lear."

—*T. S. Baynes.*

"The greatest genius that, perhaps human nature has yet produced, our *myriad minded* Shakespeare."

—*S. T. Coleridge,*

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"No other author has, ever so copious, so bold, *creative* an imagination, with so perfect a knowledge of the passions, humours, and sentiments of mankind. He painted all characters, from kings down to peasants, with equal truth and equal force. If human nature were destroyed and no monument were left of it, except his works, other beings might know *what man was* from those writings."

—*George Lord Lyttleton.*

"When Learning's Triumph o'er her bard'rous Foes
First rear'd the stage, immortal Shakespeare rose ;
Each change of many-coloured Life he drew,
Exhausted Worlds, and then imagin'd new."

—*Garrick*

"Shakespeare is above all writers the poet of Nature, the poet that holds up to his readers a faithful mirror of man and his environment, manners and life. His characters do not belong to this country or that, one profession or the other, but come from all lands and all walks of life. They are the rightful progeny of common humanity, such as the world will always supply and observation will always find, unaffected alike by the vagaries of fashion, the accidents of custom and the changes of opinion. They run whole gamut of the world, the flash and the devil, motivated by general passions and principles and conforming to the common pattern of life. Shakespeare's persons are not individuals ; they are a species eternal and true taken from nowhere in particular, though met here, there and elsewhere.

And yet paradoxically enough no two characters of Shakespeare are alike. Shakespeare never repeats himself. Indeed, universality of idea and individuality of character are his specialities. With all the versatility of a dramatic Proteous, he changes himself into every character and enters into every condition of human nature. Myriad are the shapes and guises, but like the colours in kaleidoscope, all so bright and clear, all so true to life, that in the words of Pope it is a sort of injury to call Shakespeare's characters by so distant a name as copies of Nature, Or, as Goethe would have it 'his characters are like watches with dial-plates of transparent crystal : they show you the hour like others, and the inward mechanism also is all visible.

It was not for nothing that Shakespeare's last hero was a master-magician, a universal charmer. Prospero is a significant symbol ; but with all its significance it does not explain enough. Rather, like Wordsworth's beautiful violet, half-seen, half-hidden, it only beautifully tantalises. For magic, however, transfiguring from the simple Mango trick to the stupendous Rope trick is, after all, only a trick, eeric and esoteric true, but a trick all the same. Shakespearean magic, on the other hand, lies upon and above board in his plays and poetry for anyone with the eye, the ear and the wit to understand. And for a second, all magic dies with the magician. A posthumous thaumaturgist is neither seen nor heard of. Yet Shakespeare's magic was not made much of in his life-time. He had caused a flutter in the devecots

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of dramatists and poets, he had made them sit up and take notice ; but when all is said, he was one among the many, a tall poppy with whom others, even the tallest of the tall, had to reckon but by no means surely a Triton among the minnows. His magic worked later, distance lent enchantment to the view and continues still to lend it. Already Shakespearean has grown from a snowball into an avalanche and Shakespearolatry has become a religion.

Well, where vagueness is bliss, it is folly to be clear. What he was, the greatest thinkers, critics and poets could not fathom. Goethe called him second only to God, Coleridge termed him million-mouthed. Wordsworth compared him to a mountain, and they all left it at that. Perhaps an Aristotle alone could place Shakespeare in a clear-cut category and Aristotle flourished once in remote antiquity and is not going to flourish again. Nonetheless, goods and groundlings alike, or as Bottom would say, every mother's son of us, could enjoy the magic. Here is matter for all tastes, all prejudices, all predilections. Here is knowledge without tears, pleasure without sin, uplift-ment without penance.

Nor need you be taken aback at this funny farrage of *panem* at *circeness* church juxtaposed with cinema-screen and religion brought to the Rialto. If you call it Gilbertiane, well, then so is life, at once topsy-turvy and humorous. For what is life but a musical miscellany of pleasure and pain, high seriousness and hilarious laughter. And to this Shakespeare with a voice deep as Tophet and high at Heaven. In this Shakespeare was a prophet. A peculiar prophet though in that the man sang and did not reach except through music. More, while he set out the riddle of life and gave all the necessary clues, he did not care to solve it but left his Pericles. Prince of Type, as a standing warning against daring Oedipuses. Enough that life has a harmony as the Spheres have theirs : this for angels, that for mortals. Life is a gigantic promenade concert with the whole world for its audience. They that stand still or go out of their way seeking the Primum Mobile do so at their peril. This is what Shakespeare has sung and spoken through a megaphone as it were in this works with none of your Dantean defeatism but with right apostolic fervour.

Hence, it is that Shakespeare's gayest comedies are interspersed with scenes and interludes of solemn seriousness and civil-suited melancholy, and his tragedies of the deepest pathos are chock-a block with passages and part-singings of scintillating wit and side-splitting laughter. Hence, too that the crown comic character of all times, that mountain of flesh exuding wit at every pore, that brazen-browed Toledo tongued Sir John Falstaff of Munchausenesque mendacity and Shavian cynicism, Indian Bidushak and Birbal in one, rolls his ways through tragedies and comedies on end, illustrating as if in person that life is one chiaroscuro of alternating light and shade, one fabric of which joy and sorrow are the warp and the woof.

Even a prophet was without honour in his land. Not so Shakes-peare.

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His writings were confessed to be such.
As neither Man, nor Muse can praise too much ;

and this was 'all men's suffrage.' He broke 'unities and usage,' Priscians head and princely genealogies and was the more applauded for that 'Better a meachanic rule were stretched or broken than a great beauty were omitted', said Dryden. 'There is more beauty,' said Addison, 'in the words of a great genius who is ignorant of the rules of art, than in those of a little genius who knows and observes them.' Ignorant of the rules perhaps but by no means an ignoramus.' For, though without a particular piece of Oxon parchment in his portfolio, he had yet won many a richer distinction in the University of Genius which has turned out Homer and Chaucer before and was later to turn out Balzac and Dickens, *viz.*, the public street and the tavern where you read no books, the mighty bloodless substitute for life as Stevenson called them but the 'liveableness of life' in all the colours of the rainbow. Not that he did not know art, but that he knew it so well that he could conceal it too. 'He was master of an art which no one else could reach,' said Ben Jonson who was an artist if ever there was one. And that Sultan of Literature, Dr. Johnson, who has debunked many a fair reputation nobly won, wrote, 'He who has mazed his imagination in following the phantoms which other writers raise up before him, may here be cured of his delirious ecstasies, by reading human sentiments in human language: by scenes from which a hermit may estimate the transactions of the world and a confessor 'predict the progress of the world. More trenchant still is Lyttleton who in his *Dialogues of the Dead* said that Shakespeare's knowledge of the passions, the humours and the sentiments of mankind was so perfect and so perfectly expressed that 'if human nature were destroyed and no monument were left of it, except his work, other beings might know that man was from those writings.' S uch was thrice-sweet Shakespeare, 'honey-tongued' and 'mellifluous' of speech, saccharine of diction and of luscious imagination all compact

The world is prolific of authors and prolific authors are the order of the day. There are authors that amuse, authors that instruct, and authors that elevate, to say nothing of 'shilling, shockers' and penny-a-liners beyond the pale. But authors who at once amuse, instruct and elevate are the salt of the earth. No wonder, they are so rare and like all rare things of utility they are precious as well. Free trade or economic nationalism, they have an international value and currency of their own. Quotas, pacts and restrictions bind them not : they are heart-deep. For them, there exist neither snobbish segregations of class nor Chauvinstic quarantines of country : they are cosmopolitans honoured with the freedom of every city of civilization. They go strong while they live : and when they have shuffled off their mortal coil they go stronger like Caesar's spirit. To this privileged band belongs William Shakespeare. He has been more than three centuries dead. But he was an Elizabethan—the age of vim, valour and wine, the 'water of life.' The older the wine, the better the banquet they say. What about Shakes-

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peare, then, the wine of life incarnate, whose banquet persists still, dainty and delicious as ever ? A super- Voronoff for the mind and the spirit with hormones and homoglobins all complete ! Or a new version of Peter Pan, ever young himself and making others young too. A modern poet has written :

'Revolving years have flitted on,
Corroding Time has done its worst,
Pilgrim and worshipper have gone
From Avon's shrine to shrines of dust ;
But Shakespeare lives unrivall'd still
And unapproached by mortal mind,
The giant of parnassus' hill,
The pride, the monarch of mankind.'

"Great praise is this ! Yet not enough. For though he bestrides the narrow world like a colossus, neither the men who walk under his huge legs are all petty, nor do his admirers whose name is legion peep about to find themselves dishonourable graves. Ben Jonson and Milton, Carlyle and Quincey, Goethe and Schiller, were giants themselves, but they acknowledged and acclaimed him their 'Big Brother.' And far from finding themselves dishonourable graves they lived and learned, poured libations and burnt incense at his shrine and were inspired to works of immortality. Though monarch of mankind his is no ordinary monarchy. For while, thrones may totter to the dust, crowns tumble in the mire, and kings wander jobless—the War aftermath has sent many perambulating the capitals of Europe—Shakespeare on his pedestal in the valhalla of Literature will stand firm and four-square, swaying generation after generation of scholars and savants, critics and connoisseurs, hermits and hero-worshippers alike."

—*D. S. Varshney.*

2. Dramatic Faculty

"Many dramatic writers of different ages are capable, occasionally, of breaking out, with great fervour of genius, in the natura language of strong emotion. No writer of antiquity is more distinguished for abilities of this kind than Euripides. His whole heart and soul seem torn and agitated by the force of the passion he imitates. He ceases to be Euripides ; he is Medis ; he is Orestes. Shakespeare, however, is most eminently distinguished, not only by these occasional sallies, but by imitating the passion in all its aspects, by persuing it through all its windings and labyrinths, by moderating or accelerating its importuosity according to the influence of other principle and of external events, and finally by combining it in a 'judicious manner with other passions and propensities, or by setting it aptly in opposition. He thus unites the two essential powers of dramatic invention, that of forming characters ; and that of imitating in their natural expressions, the passions and affections of which they are composed."

—*W. Richardson.*

3. Nature versus Art

"He was an eminent instance of the truth of that rule, *poeta non fit sed mascitur* ; one is not *made*, but *born* a poet. Indeed, his

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learning was very little, so that, as Cornish diamonds are not polished by any lapidary, but are pointed and smoothed even as they are taken out of the earth, so nature itself was all the *art* which was used upon him.

Many were the wit-combats betwixt him and Ben Jonson ; which two I behold like a Spanish great galleon and an English man of war ; Master Jonson (like the former) was built far higher in learning ; solid but slow in his performances. Shakespeare, with the English man of war, lesser in bulk, but lighter in sailing, could turn with all tides, tack about, and advantage of all winds, by the quickness of his wit and invention." —*Thomas Fuller.*

"If ever any author deserved the name of an *original* it was Shakespeare. Homer himself drew not his art so immediately from the fountains of Nature ; it proceeded through Egyptian strainers and channels, and came to him not without some tincture of the learning or some cast of the models, of those before him. The poetry of Shakespeare was inspiration indeed ; he is not so much an imitator as an instrument of Nature : and it is not so just to say that he speaks from her, as that she speaks through him." —*Alexander Pope.*

"Shakespeare came out of Nature's hand like Pallas out of Jove's head, at full growth hand nature." —*George Colman.*

4. Truth and Variety of Character

"His *characters* are so much Nature herself, that it is a sort of injury to call them by so distant a name as copies of her. Those of other poets have a constant resemblance, which shows that they received them from one another and were but multipliers of the same image ; each picture, like a mock rainbow, is but the reflection of a reflection. But every single character in Shakespeare is as much an individual as those in life itself ; it is as impossible to find any two alike ; as such as from their relation or affinity in any respect appear most to be twins, will upon comparison be found remarkably distinct. To this life and variety of character we must add the wonderful preservation of it, which is such throughout his plays, that, had all the speeches been printed without the very names of the persons, I believe one might have applied them with certainty to every speaker. —*Alexanedr Pope.*

"His plays alone are properly expressions of the passions, not descriptions of them. His characters are real beings of flesh and blood ; they speak like man, not like author." —*William Hazlitt.*

5. Powers of Insight and Imagination

"Shakespeare is as astonishing for the exuberance of his genius in abstract notions, and for the depth of his analytic and philosophic insight, as for the scope and minuteness of his poetic imagination. It is as if into a mind poetical in *form* there had been poured all the *matter* that existed in the mind of his contemporary Bacon. In Shakespeare's plays, we have thought, history, expedition, philosophy, all within the round of the poet." —*David Masson.*

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"Through all the forenoon of our triumphant day till the utter consummation and ultimate ascention of dramatic poetry incarnate and transfigured in the master-singer of the world, the quality of his tragedy was as that of Marlowe's broard, single and intense ; large of hand, voluble of tongue, direct of purpose. With the dawn of its latter epoch a new power comes upon it, to find clothing and expression in new forms of speech and after a new style. The language has put its foreign decoration of lyrics and elegiac ornament ; it has found already its infinite gain in the loss of those sweet superfluous graces which encumbered the march and enchained the utterance of its childhood. The figures which it invests are now no more types of a single passion, the incarnations of a single thought. They now demand a scrutiny which tests the power of a mind and tries the value of a judgment ; they appeal to something more than the instant apprehension which sufficed to respond to the immediate claim of those that went before them. Romeo and Juliet were simply lovers, and their name brings back to us no further thought than of their love and the lovely sorrow of its end ; Antony and Cleopatra shall be before all things lovers, but the thought of their love and its triumphant tragedy shall recall other things beyond number—all the forces and fortunes of mankind, all the chance and all the consequence that waited on their imperial passion, all the infinite variety of qualities and powers wrought together and welded into the frame and composition of that love which shook from end to end nations and kingdoms of the earth. —*A. C. Swinburne.*

6. Humanity

"What I admire in Shakespeare, however, is that his loves are all human—no earthliness hiding itself from itself in sentimental transcendentalism—no loves of the angels, which are the least angelic things, I believe, that float in the clouds, though they do look down upon mortal feelings with contempt just as the dark volumes of smoke which issue from the long chimney of a manufactory might brood very sublimely over the town which they blacken, and fancy themselves far more ethereal than those vapours which steam up from the earth by day and night. Yet these are pure water and those are destined to condense in black soot. So are the transcendentalisms of affection. Shakespeare is healthy, true to Humanity in this..... .....You always know that you are on an earth which has to be refined, instead of floating in the empyrean wings of wax. Therein he is immeasurably greater than Shelley. Shelleyism is very sublime, sublimer a good deal than God, for God's world is all wrong and Shelley is all right—much purer than Christ, for Shelley can criticise Christ's heart and life—nevertheless, Shelleyism is only atmospheric profligacy to coin a Montgomeryism. I believe this to be one of Shakespeare's most wondrous qualities—the humanity of his nature and heart. There is a spirit of sunny endeavours about him, and an acquiescence in things as they are—not incompatible with a cheerful resolve to make them better." —*F. W. Robertson.*

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7. Magic of Expression

"Let me have the pleasure of quoting a sentence about Shakespeare, which I met with by accident not long ago in the *Correspondent*, a French review which not a dozen English people, I suppose, look at. The writer is praising Shakespeare's prose. 'With Shakespeare' he says, 'proses come, in whenever the subject, being more familiar, is unsuited to the majestic English iambic.' And he goes on : Shakespeare is the king of poetic rhythm and style, as well as the king of the realm of thought along with his dazzling prose. Shakespeare has succeeded in giving us the most varied, the most harmonious verse which has ever sounded upon the human ear since the verse of the Greeks. M. Henry Cochin, the writer of this sentence, deserves our gratitude for it ; it would not be easy to praise Shakespeare, in a single sentence, more justly." —*M. Arnold.*

8. Humour

"Shakespeare illustrates every phase and variety of humour : a complete analysis of Shakespeare's humour would make a system of psychology."

Elizabethan Stage

Originally, a scaffold was set up either in the churchyard, or market-place for the performance of a religious play, but for a secular play the innyard was chosen. The innyard resembled the quad of a small college or almshouse—it was surrounded by rooms, and had an open gallery running round it, on which the doors of the chambers on the upper floor gave in.

This was practically the model of the theatre that Burbage built on the site of the dissolved priority of Hollywell in Shoreditch in London in 1576. He, however, made the yard a circular one, like the bear-baiting and bull-baiting rings already existing on the other side of the Thames in Southwark. This led Shakespeare to speak of his theatre as 'this wooden O'. Before the end of the century several more play-houses on more or less the same model sprang up. In 1598 Richard and Cuthbert, sons of Burbage, built the famous Globe in which most of Shakespeare's plays were performed.

From existing fascimiles and many scattered references of the time we can fairly reconstruct the Elizabethan stage. The circular yard, which corresponds to 'the pit,' was open to the sky, surrounded by three tiers of galleries, and having an oblong stage raised upon trestles projecting from one side almost into the middle of the area. The players were thus surrounded by spectators. The highly priced seats were in the gallery hehind the stage in a private box, called 'the lords room.' The uppermost gallery was roofed with thatch or tiles, and the stage was partly covered with provision to carry off the rain.

The stage was sometimes a movable platform, as we have said above. At the back of the stage, was a screen in which were two doorways, opening out of the actors' retiring room ; between them was a third door hidden by a curtain, which formed the background of the stage. The expression 'behind the arras' (where Polonius,

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e. g., in *Hamlet* lay in hiding) points to this curtain at the back of the stage. Behind the curtain was a recess, which could be used as an inner scene to represent *e. g.*, the tomb of Juliet, or the bed-chamber of Desdemona. It was immediately below the upper stage. The upper stage was used to represent the battlement of a castle-wall, the upper storey of a house, the balcony of Juliet's bedroom, or any scene described as above in the stage directions.

The arras or the background could be used to indicate scenery by means of crude pictures painted on cloth. At any rate what little scenery was used was of a very primitive kind. M. Jusserand points out that Shakespeare made in for 'the deficiency of the scenery by his wonderful descriptions of landscapes, castles and wild moors." If Shakespeare had painted scenery at his command we would have lost much of his fine descriptive poetry. Theatrical property was, however liberally put into requisition as we learn from the account-books of the Elizabethan times. The allusions in Ben Jonson's Prologue to *Every Man in his Humour* are significant—for he says he would have no

> "roll'd bullet heard,
> To say it thunders ; nor tempestuous drum
> Rumbles, to tell you when the storm doth come."

Large sums of money were spent on the costume of the players. But the costume was Elizabethan, there being no idea to reproduce the costume of the period in which the play was set 'Shakespeare was no archaeologist : as the mediaeval artist who gave us the wall paintings and sculpture of our churches represented Pilate's Roman soldiers in plate armour, so his Romans, in *Coriolanus* for example, carry pistols, are put in the stocks, say grace before meat and generally behave and look like the Elizabethans who watched them perform."

All the female parts were played by men and boys in woman's dress. On this point the lines, spoken by Portia (*Merchant of Venice*, III, iv, 62—68) make an oblique comment :

> "I'll hold the any wager,
> When we are both accounted like young men,
> I'll prove the prettier fellow of the two.
> And wear my dagger with the brave grace,
> And speak between the change of man and boy
> With a reed voice, and turn two mincing steps,
> Into a manly stride."

It seems incredible that boys with 'cracked' voices could do justice to such parts as those of Lady Macbeth, Volumnia, Cleopatra. Cleopatra at any rate seems to lament before her death that 'some *squeaking* Cleopatra' will 'boy' her greatness.

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INTRODUCTION TO 'MACBETH'

Date of Publication

Macbeth was first published in the First Folio (1623). It is classed among the tragedies, and comes in between *Julius Caesar* and *Hamlet*. The Register of the Stationers' Company shows an entry, relating to *Macbeth*, dated the 8th November, 1623, with the remark that it had been "formally entered to other man." It means that there could not have been any previous publication of the play.

Shakespeare's plays and poems were published in one of two forms—in books of quarto or in books of folio size. During his lifetime only sixteen of the plays were published in quartos. After his death one more quarto volume was published. His collected works were first published, in 1623, in the First Folio edition. It contained thirty-six plays, and it was published under the supervision of Heminge and Condell, two of the poet's actor-friends. They divided the plays into three groups—*Comedies*, *Histories* and *Tragedies*, without any reference to their date of composition. The Second Folio appeared in 1632 ; the Third Folio in 1663 including *Pericles* for the first time as well as six other plays, which cannot be definitely ascribed to Shakespeare. The Fourth Folio dated 1685, was a reprint of the Third.

The Quarto text is inaccurate ; the quarto editions were usually pirated and have been complied from shorthand notes of the plays, when they were presented on the stage. The First Folio presents an accurate version of the play. The Second Folio introduces some corrections, and at the same time makes some uncalled for changes in the original text.

Date of Composition

The exact date when *Macbeth* was written cannot be definitely ascertained. We may consider the following statements :—(1) It is certain that *Macbeth* was written between 1603-1610 ; (2) It is almost certain that it was composed in 1605-1606 ; (3) The balance of probability lies in favour of 1606.

Dr. Simon Foreman saw the play staged at the Globe Theatre on April 20, 1610. So *Macbeth* must have been written before 1610. This fact is recorded by him in a manuscript diary. It is evident that *Macbeth* was written soon after the first union of England and Scotland on March 24, 1603, when James VI of Scotland was crowned as James I of England. On this point following facts should be taken into consideration.

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(1) Shakespeare chose a Scottish subject, Scottish colouring and atmosphere as a compliment to King James. He linked up the Scottish legend of the King by making him a descendant of the mythical Banquo whom he paints as a brave soldier and loyal friend.

(2) References to witchcraft are intended to please the King who had himself published a pamphlet on *Demonologie* in 1599, and enacted laws against the practice of witchcraft.

(3) The vision of the King in Act IV, Scene i, makes Banquo the founder of the Stuart family, and the other kings shown in the mirror, were intended to be future kings of the Stuart line after James I.

(4) The "twofold balls and treble sceptres" of Act IV, Scene i, refer to James I as the first King of Great Britain and Ireland.

(5) The practice of "touching for the evil" referred to in Act IV, Scene iii, was revived by James I to please his English subject. Shakespeare pays him a graceful compliment by introducing it.

(6) The lines, "Though his bark cannot be lost, yet it shall be tempest-lost" (Act I, Scene iii), refer to the violent storms with dispersed King James' fleet when he was bringing home his bride, Anne of Denmark, in 1589.

(7) The investiture, in the play, of Macbeth with the Thaneship of Cawdor forfeited by a 'disloyal traitor,' recall the investiture of Sir David Murray as Lord Scone. It was a title forfeited by the Earl of Gowrie for treason against King James, and awarded to Sir David for his share in saving the life of the King. This took place by special commission, with great pomp ; and a similar scene enacted on the stage would be appreciated by James I.

(8) In August 1605, James visited Oxford. He was greeted by three students of St. John's College, dressed as the Weird Sisters. They addressed him in Latin as the descendant of Banquo. It is stated that the King very much appreciated this honour. It is likely that Shakespeare got his hint of his play from this performance. Some critics even affirm that Shakespeare was commissioned by the King himself to write this play. It should be remembered that the theatrical company for which Shakespeare wrote was at this time called the King's Players and enjoyed royal patronage.

All this evidence points to the fact that *Macbeth* was written soon after the accession of James I to the English throne. The evidence that we have adduced, seems to confirm the date 1605-1606.

We may now consider the topical allusions in the play :

(1) "Here's a farmer that hanged himself on the expectation of plenty" (Act II, Scene i)—it refers to the abundant harvest of 1606, in which year the prices of wheat, barley and malt went down.

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(2) The 'Equivacator' in the same passage applies to Henry Garnet, a Jesuit, who at his trial for the Gunpowder Treason, held on March 28, 1606, perjured himself and then justified his perjury by the doctrine of equivocation—Garnet was hanged in May,1606.

(3) The reference to an English tailor "stealing out of the French hose"—also in the Porter's Speech—is explained by Anthony Nixon in his *Black Year* published in 1606. About 1596, French breeches were very large. When the fashion changed in France, it was quickly adopted in England.

(4) The description of Cawdor's execution agrees circumstantially with the fate of the Earl of Essex, who was executed on a charge of high treason in 1601, and who behaved with examplary coolness and fortitude on the scaffold. The portrait of Cawdor might have been suggested by both Gowrie and Essex. But there is one point against connecting him with Essex. The reference to Essex was likely to endanger the theatrical company to which Shakespeare was attached.

(5) The "fatal bellman" of Act II, Scene ii, may refer to the appointment of a monitor at Newgate Prison under the terms of an endowment made by one Richard Dow, a merchant-tailor, in 1605. Verity quotes the following rhymed version of the bellman's admonition :

> "All you that in the condemned hole do lie,
> Prepare you, for tomorrow you shall die,
> Watch all and pray ; the hour is drawing near
> That you before th' Almighty must appear."

That date of *Macbeth* can also be partly determined by references to contemporary authors. These may be considered here :

(1) Middleton's *Puritan* published in 1607, has the following passage in Act IV, Scene i,—"instead of a jester we'll have a ghost in white sheet sit at the other end of the table." This is certainly an allusion to Banquo's Ghost.

(2) Marston has many passages in his *Sophonisba*, 1606, which seem to echo *Macbeth*.

(3) *The Tragedy of Caesar and Pompey*, 1607, has the following lines, "Why, think you, lords that 'tis ambition's spur that pricketh Caesar to these high attempts." These lines seem to have been suggested by Macbeth's soliloquy, Act I, Scene vii.

(4) In the second edition of his Albion's *England*, 1606, Warner added a *Historie of Macbeth* which is not found in the first edition. This is an evidence of the popularity of Shakespeare's play.

(5) The English Book of Daniel's *Civil Wars*, 1609, has : "He draws a traverse 'twixt his grievances ; Looks like the time his eye

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made not report." This is supposed to be based on "To beguile the time. Look like the time." Act I, Scene v.

(6) Camden in his *Romaines*, 1605, writes of "that admirable gift hereditary to the anointed princes of this realm in curing the King's evil." Shakespeare is supposed to have this passage in mind when he wrote, "the succeeding royalty." Act IV, Scene iii.

(7) Shakespeare is supposed to have written *Antony and Cleopatra* in 1607. For this play he made use of the *Life of Antony* in North's *Plutarch*. *Macbeth* also has two passages that are suggested by Plutarch. So it is inferred that the two plays must have been written at about the same time.

Applying the *metrical tests* to *Macbeth*, we find that it belongs to the third group of Shakespeare's plays—the group of the four great tragedies—*Hamlet*, *Othello*, *King Lear* and *Macbeth*. As Shakespeare grew more confident of his art and technique, he took more and more liberties with the Iambic pentameter line, which is the standard line of his blank verse ; he introduced irregular feet, short lines, hypermetrical syllables (double endings and Alexandrines). When there is less rhyme in a play it is the sign of later composition, just as, if there are more end-stop lines in a play, the earlier is the date, or if there are more enjambed lines in the play, the later is the date. Or again, in the later plays there are more of weak and light endings. It should be pointed out that a line has a weak ending if it ends in a monosyllable so unimportant as a conjunction or preposition with the result that the voice cannot rest upon it, but is hurried on to the next line. It has a light ending when it ends in a monosyllable, for example, as unemphatic pronoun or auxiliary verb with the result that the voice does not naturally rest on it. Or again if there is more prose in a play, it is later in composition. In the light of these tests, *Macbeth* shows that Shakespeare is passing from one metrical system to another, and that while it comes after *King Lear*, it precedes *Antony and Cleopatra*. So we arrive at 1606 as the date of the play.

If we take the evidence of style and thought, *Macbeth* seems to belong to Shakespeare's middle period. Shakespeare's later plays are marked by condensation of language, compressed metaphors, and richness, and complexity of imagery. *Macbeth* seems to come between the three other great tragedies, and *Antony and Cleopatra* and *Coriolanus* on the other.

There who advocate the later date, put forward the following considerations :

The accession of James I was a subject which would not lose its interest for several years. The evidence furnished by the Porter's Speech cannot be conclusive and may refer to other years. But most relative to the date of the play is the summary of Dr. Simon

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Forman and from it appears that it was then newly staged. Lastly, reference to two contemporary plays point to much later date than 1606. There are, (i) A passage in Beaumont and Fletcher's *Knight of the Burning Pestle* published in 1611, which contains an allusion to Banquo's Ghost. (ii) A passage in Webster's *Vittorsia Corombona* published in 1612. Webster writes, "Here's a white hand, can blood so soon be washed," which is obviously based on *Macbeth*, Act V, Scene i.

Interpolations and Spurious Passages in Macbeth

The text of *Macbeth*, as contained in the First Folio, is considered to be faulty. Many words and phrases can be explained satisfactorily : the punctuation is defective and the division into lines haphazard. Sometimes stage-directions are not very clear. It is suggested that the First Folio was printed from a stage-copy of the play, which would be cut up and divided among the actors and parts of which might even be missing. Some of the obvious errors are corrected in the Second and Third Folios ; but little reliance can be placed on the Fourth Folio.

From the defects of the text and obscurity of passages and missing links it has been concluded that the whole of the play was not written by Shakespeare himself, parts having been added by other writers, or taken over from their works. One of the theories is that after Shakespeare had left the stage, the play was revised by others in order to bring it up to date. Thus, the interpolations and the abridgements and mutilations can be accounted for.

Several passages in the play have been declared as spurious on the grounds of style, inconsistency, irregular meter and versification. Let us take these passages one by one, and consider them on their merits.

(i) The Hecate Passages—[Act III, Scene v (whole) : Act IV, Scene i (lines 29-43 and lines 125-132). It is argued that Hecate is a superfluous character and that the imabic meter is unusual in a witch-scene : that there is a blending of Teutonic myths ; that the conceits are not in Shakespearean manner. Verity defends the introduction of Hecate on the ground of dramatic tradition and convention. It is a part of the orthodox machinery of witch-craft. The Masque Comedy is a medley or the femi-classical and the mediaeval and the romantic. Whatever the incongruity, it was not taken seriously on the Elizabethan stage.

(ii) The Sergeant Scene (Act I, Scene ii)—The objections are threefold—that the matter is slovenly and the style bombastic that lines 52-53 are not consistent with Act I, Scene iii, lines 72-73 and 111-114. It is also pointed out that there is little sense in sending

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a severely wounded soldier to carry the news of victory. It is true that several lines are metrically irregular, but such irregularities are not rare in Shakespeare. As regards the style, critics cannot agree among themselves. Some even think that there is a profusion of Shakespearean touch in the scene. Verity gives the following reasons for considering the scene genuine—(1) Macbeth's greatness as a soldier must be shown in order to arouse pity and complete the tragic idea. (2) His military power wins for him a reward from Duncan and, thus, adds ingratitude to his other crimes. (3) This reward hastens the plot by active as an additional impulse to crime. (4) Macbeth's victory is followed by the investiture of Malcolm as heir-apparent. The scene is, therefore, a necessary preliminary to the next one.

(*iii*) *The Porter's Speech* (Act II, Scene iii)—Style and the coarseness of the passage are regarded as un-Shakespearean. Then again the comic porter is considered as being out of place amidst tragic horrors.

De Quincey points out that the object of the Porter's Speech is "to throw an interest on the murder." Chambers adds the following remarks—(1) the emotional contrast is deliberate, necessary and characteristic of Shakespeare. (2) the Elizabethan drarma is an incongruous medley of high and low of light and dark, of laughter and tears ; (3) the style is Shakespearean as old 'devil-porter-it,' 'the primrose way to the everlasting bonfire' show.

(*iv*) *The King's Evil Passage* (Act IV, Scene iii, lines 135-154)—This passage is said to have been inserted before the play was presented before the Court. If it is supposed to be an interpolation, it would more likely than not be by Shakespeare himself. The dramatic necessity of the passage is that it gives time to Macduff to recover from his surprise.

(*v*) *Some Witch-scenes*—Some of the portions of the play in which Witches and the apparitions speak, have been rejected. They are Act I, Scene i (whole) ; Act I, Scene iii (1-37) ; Act IV, Scene i (71-72) ; Act IV, Scene i (79-81) ; Act IV, Scene i (89-92) and Act IV, Scene i (92-103). But there is nothing in these passages to show that it contradicts our impression of the witches ; in fact, no re ason have been given why these passages should be rejected.

(*vi*) *Rhyme-tag*—Several of the rhyming couplets : Act I, Scene iv (48-53) ; Act II, Scene iii (128-129) ; Act II, Scene iv (37-38) : Act II, Scene iv (40-41) ; Act IV, Scene i (153-154) ; Act V, Scene i (76-77) ; Act V, Scene ii (20-30) ; Act V, Scene iii (61-62) ; Act V, Scene iv (19-20) ; Act V, Scene vi (9-10)—they are supposed to be interpolations. It was a practice for actors to insert such rhyming tags ; but there is no evidence to show that none of the above lines is from Shakespeare's pen.

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(vii) Miscellaneous Passages—The following passages are also rejected—Act II, Scene i (61) ; Act V, Scene v (47-50) ; Act V, Scene iii (32-42) ; Act V, Scene ii (whole). No reason is given why these passages should be considered un-Shakespearean. Take for example, Act II, Scene i (61), it is an echo of Act IV, Scene i (146-148) ; again in Act V, Scene ii, there is a dramatic necessity to show that most of the Scottish nobles were in revolt, and so it is arbitrary to think it un-Shakespearean.

(viii) The last scene Act V, Scene iii (35-75); because the double stage-direction in the Folio is defective and because the phrase "field-like Queen" seems to be inappropriate. If the stage-directions are misleading, it is not an exception to the rule. Then again, Malcolm cannot be far wrong in calling Lady Macbeth fiend-like. Nor Malcolm has any reason to be charitable towards Lady Macbeth.

'Macbeth' and 'Middleton's Witch'

Resemblances between *Macbeth* and Middleton's *Witch* have been dwelt upon. For example, the songs in the stage-direction in Act III, Scene v (33) and Act IV, Scene i (43) are said to have been supplied by *Witch*. There are also supposed echoes of Middleton in *Macbeth*. We may take one or two examples. Middleton's Hecate says, "I know he loves me not," and in Shakespeare we have "loves for his own ends and not for you," Act III, Scene v (13) ; Middleton's Hecate says,' "Let the air strike our time," and in Shakespeare we have, "I'll charm the air to give a sound, Act IV, Scene i (129). In Middleton we have "the innocence of sleep" and in Shakespeare we have "innocent sleep," Act II, Scene i (47). These resemblances may be easily multiplied. Does it, mean then that Shakespeare must have drawn upon Middleton's *Witch*.

It has now been proved that *The Witch* was written after *Macbeth*. It is, therefore, absurd to maintain that Shakespeare ever borrowed from Middleton ; as a matter of fact we could not believe that Shakespeare at the height of his literary powers, should plagiarise from such poor stuff, as *The Witch*. The resemblances are, therefore, to be explained as borrowing by Middleton from Shakespeare ; for Middleton has imitated Shakespeare elsewhere. Again as there is alleged similarity of ideas, it can be explained by both authors having drawn from contemporary superstition, and consulted the same authority as Scott's *Discoveries of Witchcraft*.

Now a word about the songs of which there are stage-directions in the play. These songs are so wretched that we cannot imagine Shakespeare to have composed them. Not a single line of them could have been penned by Shakespeare. We may suppose that the songs were written by Middleton, and inserted

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in *Macbeth* by the actors who found that the audience like witch-songs, and that music sometimes was an additional charm. It should also be remembered that Middleton was attached to the same theatrical company as Shakespeare, from which it can be easily seen that the actors playing *Macbeth* would be familiar with Middleton's songs. The point is finally disposed of by the difference in conception between the witches of Middleton and the witches of Shakespeare. It is not only a difference of degree, but of kind. Middleton's witches are imaginative creations, full of a fantastic horror and grotesque ghastliness. Middleton's witches can but hurt the body, Shakespeare's have power over the soul. And that is a fundamental difference.

Has Macbeth Been Abridged

There is a theory that *Macbeth* has been considerably mishandled and abridged. Those who maintain the theory of interpolations, would have nothing to do with this. It is pointed out that the interpolated rhyme tags mark the omission of passages. They again say that a large part of Shakespeare's original version of the play—including whole scene—is missing.

The theory of abridgement is supported by a variety of considerations. There is no Quarto edition of *Macbeth*, and Quarto editions are generally longer than Folio editions. *Macbeth* happens to be the shortest of the plays of Shakespeare except *The Comedy of Errors*. The inconsistencies which appear in the play have been occasioned by compression. There is no indication in the play when Duncan's murder was first planned. There is a large number of incomplete lines ; these incomplete lines come in because parts of the verse dialogue have been cut out. There are abrupt transitions in the play, for example, from congratulating Macbeth and Banquo on their victory, Duncan suddenly passes to the announcement that he has already selected Malcolm as his successor. And again Duncan invites himself to Macbeth's castle all too suddenly. All these facts are explained by supposing that the play has been deliberately cut down or that the First Folio was printed from a stage-copy. It was presumably an abridged version of the original play.

Of course there are arguments against the theory of abridgement. Purely negative evidence such as has been produced, cannot establish the point. If the play had been abridged, why has Macbeth's tedious and long-drawn talk with Banquo's murderers been retained ? Take the dialogue between Malcolm and Macduff—Act IV, Scene iii ; it seems too long—why had it been left untouched if the play had been cut short. It is complained that there are missing links in the play, but when we go through the play we do not seem to be aware of them. Forman's diary gives

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a summary of the play, and substantially there seems to be little difference between it and the play as we have it now. Even if we suppose that there had been any rehandling of the play, or any compression of it, it may be presumed that Shakespeare himself must have carried it out to increase the vividness of the dramatic effect. There is one point to consider : Macbeth has no under-plot and when this is so, there is no reason to think that the play was too long for the stage. The Witch-scene and the battle-scenes would evidently take a longer time to be staged. The best solution of the matter is to suppose that Macbeth was composed originally, not for the public stage, but for some private, perhaps royal occasion, when time allowed was rather short.

Time of Action of the Play

The events of the play cover only nine days with intervals :

First day—

Act I, Scenes i-iii.

Second day—

Act I, Scenes iv-vii.

Third day—

Act II, Scenes i-vi.

An interval of two weeks comes here. "Between Acts II and III a long and dismal period of Macbeth's reign described or referred to in Act IV, Scenes ii and iii, and elsewhere in the play, must have elapsed."

Fourth day—

Act III, Scenes i-v.

"It is impossible to fix the time of Act III, scene vi."

Fifth day—

Act IV, Scene i.

"Professor Wilson supposes an interval of certainly not more than two days between the fifth and sixth days ; Paton marks two days. The general breathless haste of the play is against any such interval between Macbeth's purpose and its execution."

Sixth day—

Act IV, Scene ii.

After this there is an interval of about two weeks, in order to enable Ross to make his journey to England.

Seventh day—

Act IV, Scene iii, and Act V, Scene i.

After this there is an interval of about three weeks to allow Malcolm to march to Scotland with the English troops.

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Eighth day—

Act V, Scenes ii-iii.

Ninth day—

Act V, Scenes iv-viii.

The events which, on the stage, are kept within the limits of nine days, spread over seventeen years historically. Duncan was murdered in 1039-40, and Macbeth was slain in battle in 1057-58. The dual standard of time, used by Shakespeare, enables him to create an illusion of historical time. As we go through the play, we are impressed with rapidity of movement and the shortest space of time, but at the same time we can catch hints of long time thrown in here and there.

(1) Macbeth says—"My way of life has fallen into the sear, yellow leaf," and this can mean only that he is already at the brink of old age. We may suppose that at the opening of the play he must have been in the prime of life. Here is a suggestion of a long period of a time that has elapsed between Macbeth's usurpation and his final overthrow.

(2) The flight of Malcolm to England and a Donalbain to Ireland, to which Macbeth refers in these words—"Our bloody cousins are bestowen in England and in Ireland" implies a passage of time.

(3) Macduff's flight to England and particularly his description of the miseries of Scotland, which convey to us the impression of a state of things going on for a long time, are indicative of the lapse of time.

(4) The references to Lady Macbeth—"She has light by her continually" ; or "It is an accustomed action with her to seem thus washing her hand"—show that this has been going on for some time.

Construction of the Play

Macbeth is by far the shortest of Shakespeare's tragedies. The action moves straight on to its ends with little or no pause. There are few episodes. The whole action is controlled by external forces, working in union with human will of Macbeth. The Witches go in and out throughout the play, and have much to do with the development of the action. It is likely that if Macbeth had been left to himself, he would not have committed crime to secure the crown of Scotland. He was ambitious, and Lady Macbeth, who has been aptly called the Fourth Witch, stimulated his ambition, until it could only be fulfilled by crime. The murder of Duncan, which leads to the throne of Scotland, is the first crime that Macbeth commits. It is instigated by Lady Macbeth. But once launched into the career of crime, Macbeth cannot stop. He has sleepless nights until Banquo is safely out of the way. Here

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it should be noted that till the time of murder of Duncan, Macbeth and Lady Macbeth have been associated together ; the disillusionment, wrought by their crime, weighs upon both—perhaps more heavily upon Lady Macbeth. So Lady Macbeth seems to drift apart from Macbeth. Henceforth Macbeth is to act on his own initiative ; the murder of Banquo, he keeps secret from Lady Macbeth, and arranges by himself. Now there is no going back : one crime leads to another. And so the wanton murder of Macduff's wife and children is, but a sequel to the first crime of Macbeth. The action of the play, thus, develops by the combined influences of the Witches and Lady Macbeth, and then Macbeth simply drifts on.

In the first scene we meet the Witches ; the first scene is said to strike the keynote of Shakespeare's plays. The Witches are to dominate the play. The first scene also suggests the supernatural atmosphere, and foreshadows the moral disorder, violence and bloodshed that are to come. In fact the amosphere of terror and mystery—which gives such a deep meaning to the tragedy—is already suggested in the first scene. There is some talk about a battle in the first scene. In the second scene the battle is described in detail, but be it noted that interest centres on Macbeth from the beginning.

In the first scene the Witches prepare to meet Macbeth ; in the secend scene it is Macbeth again—Macbeth who has distinguished himself in battle, and whose praises are on the lips of everybody. Even from this point the action quickens its peace. In the next scene there is the meeting between the Witches and Macbeth. A part of their prophecy is immediately fulfilled, when Ross greets him as Thame of Cawdor. Macbeth's predisposition to crime is already hinted in this scene. Ambition to become King is already there in Macbeth's mind, and he can also feel gropingly that his path to the throne may be through murder. But it seems strange that Macbeth's decision still hangs in the balance. In the fourth scene Macbeth meets the King and receives personal thanks for his services. Here is again a hint that there is a guilty thought in Macbeth's mind. The election of Malcolm as the Prince of Cumberland, sends a shiver through Macbeth :

> "The Prince of Cumberland ; that is a step
> On which I must fall down of else o'er leap.
> For in my way it lies. Stars, hide your fires,
> Let not light see my black and deep desires
> The eye wink at the hand ; yet let that be.
> Which the eye fears, when it is done, to see."

We see that there is already a conflict in Macbeth's mind. It is evident that the Witches could have got no hold upon Macbeth if he had not been inordinately ambitious and had been aspiring

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after the crown. Then it happens that Duncan invites himself as Macbeth's guest. This news is conveyed to lady Macbeth who had already been informed of her husband's encounter with the Witches. The fifth scene presents Lady Macbeth to us. The Witches are the temptresses, whom Macbeth has already met ; here is his wife, who seems to be allied with the Witches. Unlike her husband, she has no scruple ; she at once makes up her mind :

> "Glamis thou art and Cawdor, and shalt be,
> What thou art promis'd."

The resolution of Lady Macbeth welcomes the news of the coming of Duncan as their guest. So when we come to the end of the fifth scene, we see that the crime has been resolved upon, and we can easily foresee that Macbeth's vacillations will give way to Lady Macbeth's iron resolve.

The next scene brings Duncan, his two sons and lords to the Castle of Inverness. It is a short scene. The King arrives just before nightfall. It has a suggestion of idyllic repose, heightening the sense of tragedy—an instance of grim irony. Then follows the banquet ; but Shakespeare passes over the details of this banquet. The tense moment is drawing near, but before the crime is attempted Macbeth is subjected to acute searchings of the heart, revealing a wrestle of the forces, good and evil, within him. At last he gives up the whole business. At this critical moment, Lady Macbeth enters, and with "the valour" of her tongue, she revives the dead purpose of Macbeth.

When we come to the second Act, a brief pause is allowed—we meet just Banquo and his son, Fleance, who are retiring for the night. There is a bare hint that Banquo himself is affected with "cursed thoughts," which visit him in his sleep. The difference between Banquo and Macbeth is suggested in Macbeth's relieving his cursed thoughts in action. There is a hurried farewell between Banquo and Macbeth : but from the brief exchange of words between the two, it is evident that Macbeth is anxious to win Banquo over. Then Macbeth sees the phantom danger, leading him to the chamber of the King. Yet there is no callousness of a criminal in Macbeth. He shrinks from the crime which he is going to commit ; his imagination begins to plague him with vision of the dagger.

The second scene continues the tension of the previous one. The murder has been done. But there is a moral and spiritual upheaval in Macbeth. Under the first shock of the crime he seems to be partly demented. His imagination is still active in him. The ghastliness of his crime is fully revealed to his moral sensibilities. So he cries :—

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"Methought I heard a voice cry 'Sleep no more !
Macbeth does murder sleep,' the innocent sleep,
Sleep that kints up the ravell'd sleave of care,
The death of each day's life. Sore labour's bath,
Balm of hurt minds ; great nature's second course.
Chief nourisher in life's feast."

Lady Macbeth seems to be hardly affected by what has been done ; she keeps her nerve, and she takes all the necessary steps to cover their safety.

The Porter's scene provides relief to the tragic tension. With the break of the day the crime is revealed to the outside world. Macbeth seems to have recovered his nerve, and by his stage-playing, he partly succeeds in diverting suspicion from him. Lady Macbeth faints as she hears of the murder. In any case, whether fainting-fit is all shame or a reality, it saves the situation. Malcolm and Donalbain, sons of Duncan, have their own suspicion, and steal away from the Castle of Inverness.

The next scene in which the account of unusual portents of the night, when the murder of Duncan takes place, given by an old man to Ross, puts the murder in clear perspective, and also indirectly comments on it. It serves also the artistic purpose of showing the correspondence between the physical world and man's moral nature. The point is that the physical world was shocked by the crime as Macbeth's moral nature.

The two sons of Duncan being away ; it becomes easy enough for Macbeth to secure the throne of Scotland, and to shift the blame to the absent sons of the King. But there is Banquo who has his own suspicion. Now it is the turn of Banquo. The disillusion of Macbeth and Lady Macbeth comes sooner than they anticipated. Macbeth already begins to feel that he cannot sit safely on the throne until Banquo is put out of the way. On his own initiative he takes steps to have Banquo murdered. He has murdered the King with his own hands, but now he hires two assassins to murder Banquo. Craftiness is coming to aid Macbeth in his career of crime.

The second scene is psychologically more important. It is the first time that Macbeth and Lady Macbeth are alone together after the coronation. Both are disillusioned. Lady Macbeth says :

"Nought's had, all's spent,
Where our desire is got without content,
'Tis safer to be that which we destroy,
Than by destruction, dwell in doubtful joy."

Macbeth, when he enters, echoes the very thought of his wife :—

"Better be with the dead,
Whom we, to gain our peace, have sent to peace,
Than on the torture of the mind to lie

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In restless ecstacy. Duncan in his grave,

After life's fitful fever he sleeps well."

Each seems to feel for the other. Lady Macbeth wishes her husband not to brood over what is done. But Macbeth has already resolved on the murder of Banquo : he does not want to drag his wife into any further crime. So this is kept secret from Lady Macbeth. In the next scene occurs the murder of Banquo, while Fleance, his son, manages to escape. In the fourth scene there is a royal banquet, at which Banquo should have been the guest of honour. It is Banquo's ghost who keeps the appointment. The appearance of the ghost has an unsettling effect upon Macbeth. The ghost is seen by nobody else. It might be after all a hallucination. Supposing that it is a hallucination, it can imply that Macbeth's nature has not yet been coarsened and brutalised, that his imagination and sensibilities have not yet been paralysed. But we see that Macbeth is being rendered more and more desperate by the haunting sense of crime and retribution, but ostensibly by his insecurity of position. So Macbeth, to still the voice of outraged conscience within him resolves on further crime. Macduff refused his presence at the banquet. So Macduff must be put out of the way. There is already a sign of nervous breakdown in Macbeth. He is growing more violent and desperate :—

"I am in blood

Stepp'd in so far, that, should I wade no more,

Returning were as tedious as go o'er :

Strange things I have in head, that will to hand ;

Which must be acted ere they may be scann'd."

Lady Macbeth notices his nervous excitement and says :—

"You lack the season of all natures, sleep."

The next scene presents the witches again : their purpose towards Macbeth is revealed. They will just draw him on, to his confusion, till he spurns fate, scorns death and bears his hopes above wisdom. Macbeth must be lulled into a sense of security, for security is moral's chiefest enemy. The last scene portrays to as the reaction among Macbeth's subject to his crimes.

In the first scene of the fourth Act, there is a meeting again between Macbeth and Witches. The Witches confirm Macbeth's reliance on crime. He is already desperate and the Witches, by their ambiguous predictions, simply breed overconfidence in him. He is warned against Macduff ; then he is urged to be bloody, bold and resolute, for none of women born can ever harm him. Thirdly, he is told that he shall never be vanquished until Birnam Wood comes to Dunsinane Hill. The vision of eight kings, followed by Banquo's ghost, seems to depress him.

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As soon as Macbeth comes out of the cave of the witches, he learns that Macduff has run away to England.

In the second scene occurs the murder of Macduff's wife and children. The flight of Macduff marks the climax of the play. It is followed immediately by the wanton murder of his wife and children. The action henceforth takes the down-grade movement. Now there is little pause allowed before the doom falls upon Macbeth. The third scene takes us to England. The scene between Malcolm and Macduff in England is rather tedious and long-drawn out. Its dramatic relevancy need to be questioned because it is linked up with Macbeth's crime and the misery that has been inflicted upon Scotland by Macbeth's tyranny. Later they are joined by Ross who comes from Scotland. Macduff hears of the murder of his wife and children : so to the motive of public revenge upon Macbeth is added that of private wrongs. Towards the end of the scene we have again an impression of the quickening of the movement.

Before the doom falls upon Macbeth there is a glimpse into his domestic life. Nature seems to have avenged herself upon Lady Macbeth. In fact she has overstrained herself—that affair of unsexing herself now bears fruit. The doctor rightly remarks about her sleep-walking a great perturbation in nature, to receive at once the benefit of sleep and do the effects of watching. While Lady Macbeth has drifted apart from her husband, she seems to have been afflicted with nightmares. Finally, she is punished with sleep-walking ; it is her suppressed and outraged conscience that rises up to haunt with images of terror. The image of the bleeding King, whom she witnesses herself, will not go out of her memory.

The next that we hear of the Queen is that she is dead. She has taken away her life by violent means. Her brain and her nerve give way under the shock of the crime.

In the meantime the forces from England under old Siward and Malcolm muster strong against Macbeth. His own thanes desert him. Even then Macbeth does not lose his confidence. He is safe until Birnam Wood moves to Dunsinane. This confidence too is in motion. Macbeth now cries out : "I am sick at heart." The retribution has already fallen upon him. He begins to feel most keenly the desertion of his thanes, and expresses his weariness of life :

"I have liv'd long enough ; my way of life
Is fall'n into the sear, the yellow leaf ;
And that which should accompany old age,
As honour, love, obedience, troops of friends,
I must not look to have ; but, in their stead
Curses not loud but deep, mouth-honour breath,
Which the poor heart would fain deny, and dare not."

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Macbeth is now desperate, and when the avengers of his crime knock at his gate, he rushes out of the castle, and meets them in the open. He is not undeceived until the last moment. He begins to doubt the equivocation of the witches. But already he is sick of life :

"I' gin to be aweary of the sun,
And wish the estate o' the world were now undone."

In the last scene after a desperate resistance Macbeth is slain by Macduff. His confidence in the prophecy of the Witches that none of women born can harm him at last gives way, when Macduff tells him that he was ripped untimely from his mother's womb. So in the last moment of his life, when the retribution overtakes him, does he realise that these witches are juggling fiends. "That palter with us in a double sense, that keep the word of promise to our ear and break it to our hope."

The action of Macbeth, as it will appear from this analysis, is well compact. The scene is laid throughout in Scotland, alternating between Forres and Inverness—and occasionally a heath ; Fife, Dunsinane, and Birman Wood, are all within Scotland : only once it changes to England. We are hurried on from one scene to another, each linked with the previous one in the chain so that little pause is allowed—Macbeth meets the Witches, and when he hears their predictions, his latent ambition is fully awake ; time and place could not have been more favourable to him in fulfilling his ambition that when Duncan offered to be his guest : the murder of Duncan is followed by the murder of Banquo ; in the meantime Malcolm runs away to England, and Macduff joins him there, and then they and old Siward set forth against Macbeth, and the doom falls upon Macbeth.

Shakespeare is little observant of the classical unities of time and place, but the unity of action is ever present in his dramas. The unity of action does not mean anything rigid as classical authorities make out. But Shakespeare's unity of action consists not in concentrating interests on a single theme as in the balancing and harmonising of it, when it is distributed among a number of minor incidents. In *Macbeth* it has been secured by making the rise and fall of Macbeth the dramatic theme, and there has been as a matter of fact little else to claim our attention ; it shows that a stricter attention has been paid to the unity of action in *Macbeth* with the result that it is the nearest approach to all Shakespeare's tragedies to the classical model.

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Moulton's Analysis of the Play 'Macbeth'

A Passion Drama

Schemes of Actions—

Main character action	: Rise and fall of Macbeth.
Character Counteraction	: Lady Macbeth.
Character Sub-action	: Covering and involving in the Rise ; Banquo.
Character Sub-action	: Covering and involving the Fall ; Macduff.

Enveloping Supernatural Action : The Witches.

Economy—

Parallelism : Triple form of Nemesis, Irony and Oracular Action extending to the Main Action, to its parts—the Rise and Fall—separately and through to the Enveloping Action.

Contrast as a bond between the Main and Counteraction.
Balance : The Rise by the Fall, the sub-action to the Rise by the Sub-action to the Fall.

Movement—

Passion-movement, with Similar Motion between all.
Move force : The Motion Action—party assisted by Enveloping Action.

Turning Points—

Centre of Plot : Change from unbroken success to unbroken failure : (Act III, Scene iii, 18).
Catastrophe : Divided-First Shock of Nemesis :
Appearance : of Banquo's ghost (Act III, Scene iv).
Final accumulation of Nemesis : Revelation of Macduff's birth (Act V, Scene viii, 12).

Dramatic Unity in Macbeth

It has been pointed out above that Shakespeare, the father of romantic drama, has nothing to do with the classical unities of time, place and action. Ben Jonson has been a champion of these classical unities and the quarreld between the romantic and classical schools has sometimes been bitter. But Shakespeare did not have any combative spirits ; he simply followed the bent of his genius. However, the controversy between the two schools raged, Shakespeare went on untroubled. He had been true to his own dramatic conscience. If he had been too regardless of the classical unities, he has maintained almost always the unity of action. Perhaps the

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unity of action will be a misleading term, because of its classical associations, when it is applied to Shakespeare. We should better substitute it for unity of impression. As a dramatist it has always been Shakespeare's aim to achieve unity of impressions. It should not, however, be presumed that Shakespeare is ever incapable of preserving the classical unities in his plays. Of course in his romance— his later plays—he has thrown to the winds these unities. But if we take *The Tempest*, and carefully analyse its plot, we see that Shakespeare can easily meet Ben Jonson, the champion of the classical rules, on his own ground. *The Tempest*, as a matter of fact, observes all classical unities, but not too obviously and flagrantly as anyone of Ben Jonson's plays. True art lies in concealing art. Only a careful study of the plot of *The Tempest* will reveal that Shakespeare, if he minded, could have easily beaten Ben Jonson at his own game. Indeed *Macbeth*, though it does not strictly observe the classical unities of time and place, come very near to the model of a play, constructed on classical principles. It has been pointed out how compact and close-knit the action of the play is ; how there is the strictest economy of time, and how again, the acton is confined within a small area except that once the scene is changed to England. Shakespeare shows his powers in *Macbeth* as an attempt at a so-called classical play.

The unity of action is the most prominent quality of *Macbeth*. Now this unity of action resolves itself into a single impression, for all the interest centres round the rise and fall of Macbeth. The few episodes that have been admitted into the play, can be justified either for the purpose of relief or of contrast, or for the purpose of enlightening the public as to the state of affairs in Scotland. Every scene and every incident bears on the fate of Macbeth. Next it may be pointed out that the plot, though complex, is symmetrical in build and balance. Macbeth meets with continual and unbroken success up to a certain point though there soon comes the ebb in his fortunes. The escape of Fleance is the first turning point in the play. In the first Act Macbeth meets the Witches ; their words fall on the fruitful soil of Macbeth's mind and crop up in crime. In the second Act, he commits murder, and reaps full reward—kingship at which he aimed. In the third Act, his second crime is partly a success and partly a failure. There already appears bungling—Banquo is murdered but Fleance escapes. In the fourth Act he meets the Witches again ; as they formerly supplied the initiative to crime, so now they breed in him overconfidence—that sense of security which is mortal's chiefest enemy. Now his plans begin to miscarry. Macduff gives him the slip, and insane crime of murdering Macduff's wife and children, starts the reaction against Macbeth among his thanes, and nobles and brings his doom nearer. In the fifth Act retribution already comes upon him. This is the main outline of the

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rise and fall of Macbeth ; there is an organic unity in the development of the action.

Now it may be noted how the main action is varied and developed. Duncan and Banquo serve as foils to Macbeth in the first half of the play ; Malcolm and Macduff in the second half. Chance favours Macbeth thrice at the outset–Duncan's visit to his castle. Macbeth's murder of the grooms, and the flight of the Malcolm and Donalbain. Destiny seems to aid Macbeth up to this point. Later on Destiny turns against him ; here again, there are three incidents, which prepare his doom—the escape of Fleance, the equivocation of the Witches, and the flight of Macduff. The necessary result is Macbeth's desperation. He is cut to defy Destiny, and Destiny takes revenge. Malcolm avenges his father's murder by being the instrument of fate and ridding Scotland of the tyrant. Macduff, outraged husband and father, has personal vendetta against Macbeth. Fleance is destined to found a royal dynasty ; merely by continuing to live, he thwarts the most cherished desire of Macbeth.

Under dramatic unity, we may put unity of action, unity of structure, unity of thought, and unity of atmosphere. The first two have been already illustrated. Let us now see what is the leading idea of the play. The leading idea of the play is that crime brings its own punishment. In the beginning of his career, Macbeth's victory over Macdonwald and Sweno stimulated ambition. Ambition is encouraged by accident, for example the prophecy of the Witches. To ensure the fulfilment of ambition, one crime leads to another, and the result is a reaction of the people of Scotland against Macbeth. Henceforth Macbeth falls a prey to unceasing fear, engendered in his mind. His retribution begins with this fear and suspense. Lady Macbeth is driven into outrageous cruelty under the same impulse. She seems to possess a remarkable will-power, but it begins to give way under the repeated assault of fear and suspense. At last broken in body and in mind she is to take her own life. In both cases, in the mastery of evil is included the punishment of sin.

The whole of the play, from beginning to end, is one of terror and awe, terror which accompanies a stricken conscience and awe which proceeds from the play of supernatural influences on human fortunes. A darkness, physical, mental and spiritual—seems to have enveloped Scotland. The Witches appear in the very first scene in thunder and lightning. They cast a weird, gloomy spell over all that happens subsequently— murders, ghastly, cruel murders, are committed at dead of night, when owls shriek and nature is in revolt. Blood-stained daggers rise up before the murderere's eyes. People cry aloud in their sleep, even the Porter is led to fancy that he is the gate-keeper of Hell. The Ghost of Banquo

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unseats Macbeth. In her sleep Lady Macbeth betrays her own guilt and the terror of an outraged conscience, and it leads even the doctor to think of spiritual consolation rather than of drugs and pills. All these hints, strewn through the play, give to it a single colour and tone which cannot be mistaken.

Dramatic Irony in Macbeth

Dramatic irony or tragic irony seems to have derived from the use of it by the Greek dramatist, Sophocles. So sometimes a deep, subtle, penetrating irony of situation or of suggestion, is known as Sophoclean Irony. But irony seems to be an element in the scheme of things. In Thomas Hardy's novels there seems to be nothing but unending illustrations of the irony of circumstances. Now this irony, particularly the tragic irony, of which the dramatist makes use is rooted in life. It is a trick that fate or circumstance seems to play upon us. It is the recognition of a power greater than we can oppose or overcome—a power that upsets all our petty schemes and ambitions. But why is it called irony ? We seem to be unconscious of it when it is acting upon us. It is a semblance of good betraying us to our harm or peril : it is a taunt and mockery, a paltering with us in a double sense. When it is exhibited in a play on the stage, it has always a double meaning, either in the speech or action of a character, or in the situation itself—one is the plain and obvious meaning, of which the person concerned is aware, and the other is a dark, sinister meaning, which is perceived by other than those concerned.

The term is most commonly used to express the effect produced when there is a marked and significant difference in the meaning of what is being done or said on the stage for the characters themselves on the one hand, and for the spectators on the other, and this difference necessarily arises when the characters act or speak in ignorance of important facts of which meanwhile the spectators are in possession. The dramatic irony, therefore, consists in the implied contrast between the speaker's blissful ignorance of the impending fate and the spectator's fore-knowledge of it. It has been already said that irony is an element of life itself. Our own words and actions have sometimes an implication which we miss at the time, but it comes home to us latter in the frustration of our hopes in the reverses of life, in the shaping of things contrary to our expectations. When a man thinks himself to be most immune from danger, the danger falls on him ; when he has a long run of good luck, and is almost assured of its continuance, the crash comes. It is always thus with life. And as there is irony in life and in all that happens to us, it is only proper to represent it on the stage which holds a mirror to life.

Let us now see for what purpose the dramatist makes use of irony. First, as irony is a part of life, on the stage it gives the

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semblance of reality to the spectacle. Secondly, it serves to advance the plot of the play. Thirdly, it puts the spectator in the touch with the dramatist, while he is let into the secret of his intent on design. On the stage the irony sometimes lies in the double significance of the words used by a character. It is then known as verbal irony. But there is also what is called irony of .situation. Sometimes, the two blend together, and the distinction cannot be taken to be too rigid.

A typical and obvious example of irony is the second scene of the second Act in *Henry V.* A plot has been made to murder Henry V and betray the country to the French King. Henry V has got scent of the plot ; he summons the conspirators, but the conspirators do not suspect at all that their plot has been discovered till they stand self-condemned. In fact Henry lures them to their own doom. The very crime of which they are guilty, they are made to condemn in the severest terms. The first scene of the third Act in *Julius Caeser* is another instance. Julius Caeser in spite of repeated warning of fate goes out to meet his doom in supreme ignorance, and the irony of the situation impresses itself upon us when we recall the theories in which Caeser indulged in the previous scene. The second scene of the third Act of *Richard II* has the same element of irony. We know that the overthrow of Richard II is at hand, but the King, unaware of it, speaks with the most pathetic confidence of the divine protection which cannot fail him, and pictures the dispersal of Bolingbroke's forces as soon as he meets them.

In comedy, the irony has nothing of the poignancy as in tragedy, it takes a light and playful turn ; it simply plays with the double sense of words. In *As You like It*, the disguise of Rosalind offers plenty of scope for such playful, innocent, irony. Orland, who is unaware of the true sex of his companion, misses the secondary sense of her words, but we, who are in the secret, enjoy the fun.

Let us see how far this tragic irony enters into *Macbeth.* First, the atmosphere of the play, to tense with gloom and terror, is rich in tragic irony. The predictions of Witches, couched in ambiguous words, are at first fulfilled to the entire satisfaction of Macbeth, but finally involve him in ruin and confusion. The later predictions too come true, but in a sense different from that of Macbeth. It illustrates an irony of situation. The prediction of the Witches are almost literally fulfilled, but they bring in their train disappointment for Macbeth—failure of his hopes and ambition. It is only in the last moment that the irony comes home to Macbeth.

"And be these juggling fiends no more believ'd,
That palter with us in a double sense ;
That keep the word of promise to our ear,
And break it to our hope."

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Thus there is pervasive irony in the play of *Macbeth*—it enters into the very texture of it. Apart from this, there are instances of subtle elusive irony, often turning upon the sense of words, or upon the point of situation. Let us take the first words uttered by Macbeth—"So foul and fair a day I have not seen." These words obviously refer to the state of the weather. But they seem to have also a moral and spiritual significance, they easily link themselves with the Witches' catchword. "Fair is foul and foul is fair." They also foreshadow the conflict between the foul and fair in Macbeth's own nature as well as the reversal of the moral order in the play.

Here is another notable instance of irony. Macbeth says to himself :

"I have no spur
To prick the sides of my intent, but only
Vaulting ambition which o'erleaps itself
And falls on the other."

These words, as we recall them later to us, call up the image of Lady Macbeth standing by his side, and Lady Macbeth has to act as his spur.

How obvious is the irony in the King's speech at the moment of Macbeth's entrance ? Duncan of course makes this remark in reference to Cawdor :

"There's no art
To find the mind's construction in the face ;
He was a gentleman on whom I built
An absolute trust."

But Duncan is not forwarded by the treason of Cawdor, and builds an absolute trust on Macbeth. Similarly there are phrases in the play which point forward and become invested with a deeper meaning, when they are taken in connection with later events. Take these words of Lady Macbeth :

'Go get some water,
And wash this filthy witness from your hand,
A little water clears us of this deed."

How easily then our memory goes back to these words when we go through the sleep-walking scene in which we witness the torture of Lady Macbeth's soul : we see her mechanically washing her hands and still the "damned spot" is there, and still the "smell of the blood" stinks to her nostrils, and all the perfumes of Arabia cannot sweeten it.

Lastly, it may be pointed out that irony was a necessary ingredient of the Greek drama. "As the plot of the Greek tragedy was not invited by the poet ; but was drawn by him from some great common storehouse of tradition, local or panhellenic, its

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main outline, at least its general course and issue, must have been familiar to all who witnessed the representation, and thus continual opportunity was afforded them for effective contrast between the real significance of events as understood by the persons taking part in them. Of this opportunity, Sophocles in particular availed himself to the full, notably in *Oedipus the King*—one of the world's masterpieces of sustained irony, dialogue of which is packed with skilfully devised ambiguous detail. When the dramatist himself deliberately informs us in advance of facts which are concealed from some at least of the leading characters in his story, such irony becomes prominent."

Dramatic Relief in Macbeth

In tragedy, with the accumulation of soul, stirring incidents a point, is reached when the mind of the reader or the spectator is agitated or distracted by the stress of emotions and demands relaxation. Here dramatic relief implies the relaxation or diversion of emotional interest by varying the setting, or recalling to mind a different set of the conditions in which the action of the play is being developed, it is an important factor of dramatic art. It implies a recognition of the need and limitations of the human mind, rather the limitations of the human capacity for endurance, which is taxed by the tragic intensity for emotions. The Fool in Shakespeare's play often provides this relaxation to the mind on the breaking point in its tension. But it is not possible to introduce one entire comic scene or too many comic passages in a tragedy without fundamentally altering the tone and structure of the play ; so the dramatist has to make use of other means. He will introduce scenes in a lower key-scenes on which the mind can pause and rest for a while when it is being hurried on by the rush and speed of events. These scenes seem to stand apart from the main plot and action of the play. It is recognized that relaxation is generally necessary after the prolongation of a mental strain. Let us see how it is illustrated in *Macbeth*. As we go through the play our mind is on the strain, and on the edge of suspense until the murder of Duncan is accomplished ; the phantom dagger leading on to the bed-chamber of Duncan, the portents of the night, the dimming of the stars in the sky, the screams of the owl, etc, and then the revulsion of feeling in Macbeth—all these terribly shake our mind. Then occurs the murder and it is a ghastly murder, followed by Macbeth's shuddering cry. Now Macbeth's own experience becomes the experience of the reader or the spectator himself ; this is really the true function of tragedy, and this is how tragedy can purify our feelings with pity and terror. Now the point is : after we have gone through the agonising experience which is as much Macbeth's as ours we need a relaxation. Then comes the Porter's scene. The Porter's scene is fitly timed, and

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it is a true point of rest in the play. The comicality of the scene has a truly poignant tragic significance, which is not lost upon the reader or the spectator : but at the same time it abstracts our mind for a while from the tragic spectacle of the King's murder. In any case it is a welcome relief to us.

De Quincey has discussed this principle of dramatic relief in connection with his comments on the Porter's scene ; "If the reader has ever witnessed a wife, daughter or sister in a fainting fit, he may chance to have observed that the most effecting moment in such a spectacle is that in which a sign and a stirring announce the recommencement of suspended life. Or if the reader has ever been present in a vast metropolis on the day when some great national idol was carried in funeral pomp to his grave, and chancing to walk near the course through which it passed, has felt powerfully in the silence and desertion of the streets and in the stagnation of ordinary business, the deed interest which at that moment was passing through the heart of man—if, all at once, he should hear the death-like stillness broken up by the sound of wheels rattling away from the scene, and making known that the transitory vision dissolved, he will be aware that at no moment was this sense of the complete suspension and pause in ordinary human concerns so full and effecting as at the moment when the suspension ceases, and the goings on of human life are suddenly resumed. All action in any direction is best expounded, measured and made apprehensible, by reaction. Now apply this to the case in *Macbeth*. Here, as I have said, the retiring of the human heart, and the entrance of the fiendish heart, was to be expressed and made sensible. Another world has stepped in ; and the murderers are taken out of the region of human-beings, human purposes, human desires. They are transfigured. Lady Macbeth is "unsexed ; Macbeth has forgotten that he was born of woman ; both are conformed to the image of devils ; and the world of devils is suddenly revealed. But how shall this be conveyed and made palpable ? In order that a new world may step in, this world must for a time disappear. The murderers and the murder must be insulted—cut off by an immeasurable gulf from the ordinary tide and succession of human affairs—locked up and sequestered in some deep recess : we must have made sensible that the world of ordinary life is suddenly arrested—laid asleep—tranced—racked into a dread armistice : time must be annihilated ; relation to things without abolished, and all must pass as self-withdrawn into a deep syncope of suspension of earth-passion. Hence it is that when the deed is done, when the work of darkness is perfect then the world of darkness passes away like a pageantry in the clouds ; the knocking of the gate is heard, and it makes known audibly that the reaction has commenced ; the human has made its reflex upon the fiendish ; the pulses of life are beginning to beat again ; and the re-establish-

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ment of the goings on the world in which we live first makes us profoundly sensible of the awful parenthesis that had suspended them."

Other instances of dramatic relief may also be given from *Macbeth*. Banquo's murder and the wild terror of Macbeth in the Banquet scene are followed by a light dialogue between the Witches and their Queen, and then by Act III, Scene vi, which serves the same purposes. So again the murder of young Macduff is preceded by an exchange of pleasantries between him and his mother ; it sets off the peaceful domestic life against political intrigue and murder. The doctor's entry in Act IV, Scene iii, is an episode that divides the scene into parts—the painful process by which Malcolm tests Macduff's honesty and the cry of agony of Macduff when he learns the fate that has befallen his wife and children. The scenes in the fifth Act depict alternatively the interior of Dunsinane Castle and the advance of the army which Malcolm was bringing up against it. Interest is thus divided between two sets of characters and circumstances and it is a part of the dramatic device of relief.

Celtic Atmosphere of the Play

In writing *Macbeth*, Shakespeare "pierced, with an intuition that in an Elizabethan Englishman was well-nigh, miraculous, into the very heart of Highland romance. The desolate, storm-swept heaths, where the evil powers of earth and sky may fittingly meet and greet in hideous carnival ; the lonely castles, where passions of primeval intensity find their natural home, and where at dead of night, murder may stealthily move to its design ; the eerie atmosphere, where the hoarse croak of the raven and the scream of the owl, the fatal bell-man foretells the impending doom and where the ghost of the victim stalks to the head of the board in the assassin's banqueting-hall—every detail is steeped in the peculiar genius of Celtic Scotland ....Shakespeare's mighty art preserved all the mysticism of elemental passion of the Highland story, while investing it with a stupendous moral significance of which its Celtic originators had never dreamed. So Titanic is the theme as handled by the dramatist that, contrary to his usual practice, he does not complicate it with episodes, but develops it in its isolated grandeur."

—*F. S. Boas.*

The Celtic elements in the play may be noted as : (1) the Witches. (2) the superstitious belief in their powers both of sorcery and prophecy. (3) the vindictiveness of Macbeth run wild, (4) the bleak and desolate scenery. (5) the readiness to plan and execute murders. (6) unnatural protents (Act II, Scene iv), and (7) the general atmosphere of suspicion, fear, and cruelty. Duncan and Macbeth typify the old Celtic tradition—the first its good, and the second its bad side—while Malcolm presents a more refined culture —that borrowed from English Court.

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When Shakespeare is so successful in investing the play with Celtic atmosphere, it has been asked whether Shakespeare ever visited Scotland. Apart from the atmosphere, which is so subtly woven into the texture of the play, there are touches of colour, which could not have been obtained except through the medium of personal knowledge. It is pointed out that a company of English actors performed at Perth and Edinburgh in 1589. Again in 1599, at the request of King James of Scotland, Elizabeth sent a company of English comedians to Edinburgh. In 1601 a detachment of the Lord Chamberlain's Company, to which Shakespeare himself belonged, visited Scotland. It has been conjectured that Shakespeare himself saw any one or other of these three sets of actors who had played in Scotland. In support of this conjecture of the following points in *Macbeth* are emphasised :

(1) Shakespeare deviates from his authorities and rightly describes the country around Forres as a "blasted heath."

(2) He gives a very accurate description of Macbeth's Castle at Inverness in the conversation between Duncan and Banquo.

(3) Shakespeare even adopts the correct pronunciation of Scottish names, for example, Dunsinane.

(4) There are "unmistakable signs of similarity between rife, Scotch, traditional witchcraft and the Weird Sisters and Hecate."

(5) There are "many points of resemblance between *Macbeth* and the Earl of Cowrie's conspiracy's over which Scotland was profoundly moved."

(6) The topographical descriptions in *Macbeth* are accurate and vivid.

(7) Shakespeare records almost without a mistake local peculiarities, customs and habits, national superstitions and sacred associations.

Against all these points, which seem to make out that Shakespeare must have visited Scotland, it may be urged that in his Roman and Italian plays Shakespeare had shown equal mastery of local colour and atmosphere. He seems to be as conversant with the customs and manners of ancient Rome as those of contemporary Italy. It is not likely that Shakespeare ever visited Scotland. But his shaping imagination can easily supplement the stray knowledge he might have picked up from travellers. Those were days of social intercourse, and Shakespeare freely associated with all sorts of men. His knowledge of human nature was acquired in this way, and be believed too that his knowledge of the local customs and manners of different countries, must have come to him in the same way, later enriched by his insight and understanding. In fact Shakespeare had an intutive understanding of things and men. Genius works not through a process of reasoning but through

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intuition. In correctly interpreting the different ages and countries, and the infinites of men and women, Shakespeare had to depend ultimately on his intuitive powers.

While we cannot be sure of Shakespeare's visit to Scotland, it is quite likely that he picked up scraps of information about Scotland from stray travellers or from Scots in London. We need not suppose that Shakespeare must have seen with his own eyes the Castle of Inverness, when he describes it so accurately ; the realistic touches in the description had been supplied by Shakespeare's creative imagination : nor need we think that the 'blasted heath' which so much resembles in features the country round Forres, has been painted from personal observation. Every detail of the description either of the country, or of the manner, has been drawn from the poet's imagination, and aided by his insight into human life.

Raleigh rightly says, "From the evidence of the plays it has been argued that Shakespeare must have travelled.....it is unlikely that he ever crossed the Channel or visited Scotland. Certain of his allusions in *Hamlet* and the Italian plays, show some detailed local knowledge of Elsinore and of Italy.....Shakespeare must have heard innumerable stories and memories from that centre of life and commerce (Venice). In this age of cheap printed knowledge, we are apt to forget how large a part of knowledge he must have gathered in talk.....He must often have listened to tales, like those told by Othello, of the wonders of the New World. He must often have seen the affected traveller, described in *King John*, dallying with his tooth-pick at a great man's table, full of elaborate compliment.

Medieval Witchcraft and Demonology

Witchcraft was the cult of persons who, with the assistance of Satan or evil spirits, were able to practise some form of enchantment. A witch was usually found to be devoted to the diabolic power. She was the mistress of a familiar spirit who obeyed her wishes and through whose instrumentality she exhibited and exercised occult powers. In its origin, witchcraft is supposed to be an outgrowth of non-Aryan forms of devil-worship, incorporated into or surviving in early Christian communities. British witchcraft is thus traced to Druidic beginnings. Druidic deities degenerated into demons and devils.

In one of his soliloquys, Macbeth says how at dead of night "Witchcraft celebrates pale Hecate's offerings." This reminds us of the witches' Sabbath. It was a periodical ceremony at which the rites of witchcraft were celebrated, and which were presided over by the arch-fiend in the form of a goat with a human face. It was held in some wild or solitary place in the midst of forest or

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inaccessible mountain tops. The witches gathered there from all quarters. They anointed themselves with a magic ointment, rode on a stick or broom or similar article, and muttering a charm, were quickly carried to the meeting-place. Then each witch would give an account of the mischief committed by her since the last Sabbath ; and rewards and punishments were awarded according to proficiency in the art or failure to serve the purposes of the devil. Before the ceremony ended, new witches received their familiars. These familiars were given names, such as, are generally borne by pet animals. The witches also dined and danced. The dance was performed by the witches taking each other's hands and forming a circle. They parted before the cock crowed.

Witches possessed supernatural powers. They could make themselves invisible. They could harm a person by practising torture on his waxen image ; they had the "evil-eye" and could cast blight on animals and crops. They could produce calms and cold winds to sailors and could assume animal shapes. They could raise winds and storms and cause hail and thunder. They had it in their power to sink ships, open locks, dry up springs, cross the season a sieve or egg-shell and cockle shell. It was from Satan that they derived their powers, and when Satan presided at the Sabbath meetings, he was given the appellation of Hecate, Diana or Sibylla. But there was a limitation to their powers. They could not subvert the human will. They could not ordinarily kill their victim unless the latter had been first made to renounce God. Perhaps this is the reason why the Sailor's Wife (Act I, Scene iii) could not be punished except through her husband's ship being tempest-tossed.

Witches are described by Scott in his *Discoverie of Witchcraft* as old women, lame, blear-eyed, pale, hideous, wrinkled lean and deformed. They generally had beards. They were melancholy looking and horrid. In the superstitious age of Shakespeare, people believed in witches and witchcraft. Such belief seems to have been produced by confessions, mostly extorted from hags, suspected to be witches, by torture or false promises of release, by prodigies of marvels and apparitions, by fancied witch-marks found on the bodies of the witches themselves or their supposed victims, by injuries supposed to have been inflicted on men or animals by witches. The Church indirectly fostered their superstitious belief by carrying on a campaign against the supposed witches. In 1563 the first law against witchcraft was passed in Scotland. Reginald Scott took up a sceptical attitude towards the belief of the people in his *Discoverie of Witchcraft*. But James I was himself superstitious, and in his counter-reply to Scott's book .....*Demonologie*.....he upheld the old belief, and, all the machinery of superstition.

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Shakespeare's Handling of Popular Superstition and Shakespeare's Witches

Shakespeare certainly avails himself of the popular superstition of his age. It has been helpful in developing the motive and plot of his play and when it is so, there is no reason that Shakespeare should discard it. But from this it cannot be argued that Shakespeare himself believed in the existence of witches and witchcraft. There seems to be little sense in the argument that because Shakespeare's own contemporaries were more or less superstitious, he must have been superstitious like themselves. Now Richard II was very sceptical about ghosts and witches. If it had been possible for Richard II to take up a rational attitude, it might have been as well possible for Shakespeare to do so. We may in any case believe that Shakespeare suspended his judgment on a matter like this, while availing himself of the dramatic use of the supernatural machinery.

The witches play a very important part in *Macbeth* : they seem to be invested with the power of Fate or Destiny. It is, therefore, necessary to note how Shakespeare deals with these witches, whether by he takes them over from the popular superstition of the day, or whether he transforms them according to his own purpose and necessity. It may be stated as a general truth that Shakespeare takes the witches as they existed in popular imagination, and to a certain degree idealises them and invests them with additional powers, over the human souls and human destiny. While the witches in *Macbeth* keep the appearances, looks and practices of the witches of popular superstition, they are mighty abstract powers—sometimes they have been interpreted as symbols.

There have been wildest theories about the witches in *Macbeth*. We ought to note some of these theories. According to Fleay, "The Weird Sisters are the Nornir"(*i. e.*, Scandinavian goddesses of Destiny), not witches ; and that in the first scene of the fourth Act, Shakespeare discharged the Nornir and introduced three entirely new characters, who were intended to be genuine witches." By the way we may note certain other hints about Shakespeare's witches. Simon Foreman in his *Diary*, describes the Witches as three "human fairies or nymphs." Holinshed speaks of them as "three women in strange and wild apparel resembling creatures of the older world." He also mentions as "Weird Sisters, that is the goddesses of Destiny." In the third scene of Act I, there seems to be a symbolic presentation of the witches—"that look not like the inhabitants of the earth, and yet are on't ;" they can "look into the seeds of time, and say which grain will grow ;" they seem corporal but melt into the air like bubbles of the earth : they have in them more than moral knowledge.

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Spalding rejects Fleay's theory altogether. He points out that some of the chief attributes of the witches of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries are also shared by the Nornir. There can be no thought, of the Nornir in Shakespeare's mind when Banquo speaks of the "choppy fingers," the "skinnly lips," and the "beards" of the witches. It should be remembered that a beard was the characteristic feature of an Elizabethan witch. Banquo's description proves definitely that Shakespeare portrays actual witches with little thought of the goddesses of destiny for the purpose of the supernatural agency. The powers ascribed to Shakespeare's witches are exactly the powers, possessed by those accused of witchcraft in his day—foretelling the future, vanishing from sight, bewitching cattle, raising storms, causing leaks in ships, blighting corn, sailing in sieves, opening locks, etc. Now the term, "weird sisters" does not suggest anything more than the witches of popular superstition. "Sisters," and 'Weyward (*i. e.*, weird) Sisters" were often applied to witches, specially in Scotland. Shakespeare might have retained the term—'weird sister' "as a poetical and not unsuitable description of the characters to whom it was applied." It has been pointed out above that Shakespeare's witches derive their knowledge of the future from the Devil ; now this cannot be true of the Nornir. Further, let it be noted that Shakespeare introduced the witches into *Macbeth* in order to pay a compliment to James I.

Now Shakespeare's witches are not merely the dramatic impersonifications of the witches of popular tradition. They may be regarded as the unseen powers of evil who tempt and lure human victims to crime and ruin. But there is this limitation : they cannot paralyse the human will or set themselves up in direct opposition to it ; all that they can do is to shake and weaken the power of human will, when it is least predisposed to crime—and they influence human conduct through that very will. In this sense they may represent the fate that we fashion for ourselves ; they speak to us in the voice in which we would like to be spoken to. They are not, however, a blind fate which we cannot shake off ; they are, on the contrary, the reaction of inner craving and impluse on outer environment. To Dowden "the witches of *Macbeth* are not the broomstick witches of vulgar tradition. If they are grotesque, they are also sublime .....Shakespeare fearlessly showed us his weird sisters brewing infernal charms in the wicked cauldron.....the hell-broth which the witches are cooking bubbles up with no refined, spiritual poison, quintessence of mischief is being brewed out of foul things .....Yet these weird sisters remain terrible and sublime. The tingle in every fibre with evil energy, as the tempest does with the electric current ; their malignity is inexhaustible ; they are wells of sin springing up into everlasting death ; they have their raptures and ecstasies in crime ; they snatch with delight at the relics of impiety and foul disease ; they are awful inspirers of

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murder, insanity and suicide. They are surely much more than "the embodiment of inwar d temptation." Their powers are auxiliary to vice which exist outside ourselves."

Brandes on Shakespeare's Witches

"It must be foregotten that his whole spirit and witch-world meant something quite different to Shakespeare's contemporaries from what it means to us. We cannot even be absolutely certain that Shakespeare himself did not believe in the possible existence of each being.....In the beginning of the 17th century, the English people still believed in a great variety of evil spirits, who disturbed the order of nature, produced storms by land and sea, forboded calamities and death, disseminated plague and famine. They were for the most part pictured as old, wrinked women, who brewed all kinds of frightful enormities in hellish cauldrons ; and when such beldams were thought to have been dedicated, the law took vengeance on them with fire and sword. In a sermon preached in 1558 Bishop Jewel appealed to Elizabeth to take strong measures against wizards and witches. Some years later, one Mrs. Dyer was accused of witchcraft for no other reason that the toothache had for some night prevented the Queen from sleeping. In the small town of St. Osees (in Essex) alone seventy or eighty witches were burnt. In a book called, *The Discoverie of Witchcraft*, published in 1584, Reginald Scott, refused the docrine of sorcery and magic with wonderful clearness and liberal-mindedness ; but his voice was lost in the chorus of the superstitions. King James himself was one of the most prominent champions of superstition. He was present in person at the trial by torture of two hundred witches who were burnt for occasioning the storm which prevented his bride's crossing to Scotland. Many of them confessed to having ridden through the air on broomsticks or invisible chariots drawn by snails, and admitted that they were able to make themselves invisible—an art of which they strangely enough, did not avail themselves to escape the law. In 1527, James himself produced in his *Demonologie*, a kind of hand-book or text-book of witchcraft in all its developments, and in 1598 he caused no fewer than 600 old women to be burnt. In the Parliamant of 1604, a bill against sorcery was brought in by the Government and passed.....In *Macbeth*, with the witches meeting Shakespeare strikes the key-note of the drama at the very outset, as surely as with a turning-fork ; and wherever the witches reappear the same note recurs. But still more admirable, both psychologically and scenically, is the scene in which Macbeth sees Banquo's Ghost sitting in his own seat at the banquet table.....The grandeur, depth, and extraordinary dramatic and theatrical effect of this passage (Act III, Scene iv, lines 44-51) are almost unequalled in the history of the drama. The same may be said of well-nigh the whole outline of this tragedy—from a dramatic and

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theatrical point of the view it is beyond all praise. The witches on the heath, the scene before the murder of Duncan, the sleep-walking of Lady Macbeth—so potent is the effect of these and other episodes that they are burnt for ever on the spectator's memory."

Banquo's Ghost in the Banquet-Scene

It has been generally maintained that the ghost of Banquo appears twice in the banquet-scene at line 39 and again at line 93. Some critics even argue that there are two ghosts—one of Duncan and the other of Banquo ; there is again difference of opinion whether it is Duncan's or Banquo's ghost that comes first. It is pointed out that if the same ghost were to appear twice, the element of added terror, which is intended to be produced, must be discounted : and as a matter of fact Macbeth is shaken with uncontrollable fear the second time that he sees the apparition. It is also most absurdly argued that to introduce Banquo's ghost immediately after Macbeth wishes for his presence at his table, is inartistic.

Those who maintain that the first ghost is Duncan's, point out that Banquo could not have been then buried ; further that there would be little sense in Macbeth's telling his wife, "If I stand here, I saw "him," if "him," refers to Banquo of whose death Lady Macbeth is unaware. But there are points which can be easily urged against these arguments :—

(i) 'Gory locks' (*l.* 51) obviously refers to the wounds on Banquo's head (*l. 25*).

(ii) Very good sense is got out of the words 'thou canst not say I did it,' if the emphasis is put on 'I' and not on say, 'say'. Macbeth's meaning is that the actual murder having been committed by hired assassins, Banquo could not charge him with it—the very apt thought to rise to the mind of one who, in his guilty conscience, is anxious to take refuge, is a disclaimer.

(iii) Macbeth should be taken, throughout the scene, to be speaking of dead persons in general terms, so that there is no incongruity in his reference to 'graves and charnel houses' being roused at sight of the ghost of the yet unburied Banquo.

Those who argue that the second ghost is Duncan's, make much of the words 'Thy bones are marrowless' (*l. 94*) as evidence that Macbeth could not mean Banquo, who had died at the most an hour ago. But the thing is that Macbeth is speaking in general terms of the dead. 'Twenty mortal murders'—(*l. 81*) puts beyond doubt that the ghost referred to is Banquo's. Macbeth's challenge (*l.* 104) can, again, be addressed only to Banquo, who was a soldier of Macbeth's age—certainly, not the aged Duncan.

The theory of the ghost cannot certainly be maintained. If Shakespeare intended two ghosts, the stage-directions would

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have been clear on this point, as the risk of sending the wrong ghost would be too great. Foreman's description of the play contains reference only to Banquo's ghost. The introduction of two ghosts would have been inartistic as Macbeth's mind was then too much preoccupied with thoughts of the murdered Banquo. There is a grim irony in the ghost appearing each time as soon as Macbeth hypocritically desires his presence. Then again as stage-history goes, Duncan's ghost has never been included in the cast of Macbeth.

It has been questioned whether Banquo's ghost is a mere hallucination on the part of Macbeth like the "air-drawn dagger." or whether he actually sees the ghost who remains invisible to the others. Another point is whether the ghost had been visible to the audience or not. So far as the stage of Shakespeare's day was concerned, there was nothing improbable if the ghost was visible to the spectators, but remained invisible to the actors other than Macbeth on the stage. It is better to think that the ghost was visible to the audience, otherwise they would find it extremely difficult to understand what was going on on the stage, for Macbeth never mentions Banquo's name, and his words are rather disjoined. The fact is that opinion is divided on the point whether the ghost is a subjective delusion, or an objective reality. It has been seen that Macbeth is given to hallucinations ; he sees a dagger which he himself pronounces to be unreal ; he hears a voice which bids him sleep no more because he has murdered the innocent sleep. He actually describes the ghost in language which seems to resound in his own brain ; 'twenty mortal murders' is but an echo of 'trenched gashes' ; this seems to support the delusion theory. It should be noted that the ghost appears when Macbeth's words seem to summon it, and disappears when he boldly calls it 'an unreal mockery' and bids it depart. "Strange and self-abused" (*l.* 142) is a hint that Macbeth himself does not believe in the reality of the ghost. On the other hand, belief in the reality of ghosts, was quite common in Shakespeare's day ; ghosts were made to appear on the stage very frequently. The peculiarity which Banquo's ghost has, of being perceptible to only one sense of only one man on the stage, is shared by many of the ghosts of the cantemporary stage. The ghost of Hamlet's father, when it appears in the Queen's bed-chamber and is seen and heard only by Hamlet and not by his mother, is an instance. On the evidence of Foreman the ghost was represented as a reality on the stage ; and in the opinion of the poet Campwell, the idea of omitting the ghost of Banquo 'was a mere crochet, and a pernicious departure from the ancient custom. Bradley sums up : "Shakespeare (i) meant the judicious to take the ghost for a hallucination, but (ii) knew that the bulk of the audience would take it for a reality."

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When was Duncan's Murder First Planned ?

Macbeth betrays a guilty conscience when he meets the witches. He might have been aspiring to the throne, though he had no definite plan of securing it. This is proved by his starting when the witches predict his greatness, namely, being the King of Scotland. Nor can we otherwise explain the effect of the prophecy of the witches upon Macbeth, while Banquo is left unaffected. Then of course comes the earnest soliciting of Lady Macbeth. Lady Macbeth allows no respite, but simply hustles her husband into the act of murder. What she speculates about her husband also shows that Macbeth has not a clear and free conscience. She feels that her husband desires the throne and that he is aware that without evil means he connot secure the throne. The idea is that Macbeth would have the deed done but he would not like to be involved in it. So when Macbeth presents himself before his wife, he cannot make up his mind on the commission of the crime. Lady Macbeth's speech at this point seems to imply that there might have been a previous consultation between husband and wife, and we may even suppose that Macbeth suggested Duncan's murder as the means of securing the throne, and swore to carry it out as soon as he got a suitable opportunity. We refer to Lady Macbeth's following speech :—

"What beast was't, then
That made you break this enterprise to me ?
When you durst do it, then you were a man ;
And, to be more than what you were, you would
Be so much more the man. Nor time, nor place,
Did then adhere, and yet you would make both ;
They have made themselves and that their fitness now
Does unmake you. I have given suck, and know
How tender 'tis to love the babe that milks me ;
I would, while it was smiling in my face,
Have pluck'd my nipple from his boneless gums,
And dash'd the brains out, had I so sworn as you
Have done to this."

From this Bradley argues that as time and place did actually adhere when Macbeth first met his wife in the play, the plan of murdering Duncan must be discussed "at some time prior to the action of the play. The actual swearing by Macbeth must have taken place simultaneously or subsequently. This might explain why Macbeth is 'rapt' when he hears himself greeted as King, why Lady Macbeth definitely plans the murder as soon as she reads his letter, and why each one is sure that murder is in the mind of the others.

But this impression seems to contradict the impression left on the mind of the spectator, for it is not till the very end of the

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first Act that we see for the first time that Macbeth has resolved to do the crime. It takes away largely from the psychological interest of the play, as it minimises the significance of Macbeth's struggle with temptation in the shape, first of the witches' predictions, and, then of the valorous chastisement of his wife's tongue—"the witch in castle" as she has been called. Nor can this theory be reconciled to the terror shown by Macbeth in the following words :—

> "If good, why do I yield to that suggestion,
> Whose horrid image doth unfix my hair.
> My thought, whose murder yet is but fantastical,
> Shakes so my single state of man."

It is certainly difficult to harmonsie the two conflicting interpretations. We may, however, assume with Bradley that when Lady Macbeth speaks of her husband having broken the enterprise to her, she refers to his letter, and she must have assumed that her husband contemplated the murder of Duncan. Macbeth himself had a guilty conscience, and therefore, did not resent the insinuation conveyed in his wife's speech. It may be further assumed that Macbeth might have sworn to murder Duncan in an "off-the-stage interview with his wife," it might have taken place after scene V.

Did Lady Macbeth Faint ?

Critics and actors cannot make sure whether Lady Macbeth actually fainted or merely assumed a fainting-fit in order to divert attention and prevent her husband's betrayal of himself. Those who take the latter view argue :—

(i) Her nerves are too strong to give way.

(ii) The suspicion which she reads on the faces of the Lords, may be deepened or confirmed, if Macbeth is allowed to go on speaking as he did.

(iii) Macbeth ignores her appeal for help, and thus betrays his conciousness of her feignings.

(iv) Lady Macbeth does not fight against "this assault of woman's nature," but rather does her best to attract everyone's attention, and to make a break in the conversation which was drifting towards dangerous speculation.

(v) If she could, she would have stood by her husband and not left him alone to face the very difficult, even dangerous situation, when she knew him to be "infirm of purpose" and afflicted with "brain-sickly thoughts." Those who take the first view of the matter contend that Lady Macbeth, fiendlike though she was, was still a woman, and must have yielded to the shock of the moment. They have the following points to urge in support of their views :—

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(a) The horror of the situation first dawns upon her mind, as she sees it reflected in the faces of all who stand all about her. We may suppose that she nerved herself to enter Duncan's chamber only in the gravest of emergencies. Duncan's appearance put her out by its resemblance to her father's. Then Duncan's unexpected murder of two grooms and his relations, "two niece," of the details of Duncan's murder, must have overstrained her nerve and power of endurance.

(b) Macbeth, though he has slightly overdone his part, has yet been acting it with remarkable skill, and seems to be quite self-possessed. Just as she leaves it to her husband to "make their griefs and clamours roar" she also, sick and dizzy as she is, leaves him to brazen it out by his unaided wits.

(c) Macbeth does not show any concern for her when she faints because that might, he supposed, be misunderstood ; he is not such a hardened villain as to assume the appearance of being alarmed in order to avert the suspected faint.

(d) Her prolonged silence shows that she has been making efforts to compose herself.

How Old is Macbeth ?

The action in *Macbeth* does not stretch over a long period ; it seems to be over within a few months. But the action is so hurried that we lose to count time. Macbeth's torturing self-analysis could not have been prolonged through years ; on the other hand, time must be presumed to have lapsed before Macbeth whom Duncan trusted so much, and who seemed to have earned Duncan's praise and gratitude by his services and devotion, could have degenerated to a "hell kite." Act IV, Scene iii, throws out many hints that a long period has elapse since Duncan's death. But the time-scale of the play hardly allows for this. This raises the question, how old is Macbeth ? Bradley considers him to be a man between forty and fifty. He produces the following indications of his age :—

(i) There is no postitive sign of youth.

(ii) Macbeth is old enough to have supreme command of the army.

(iii) Macbeth is cousin to Duncan, an old man.

(iv) Macbeth speaks of the "boy Malcolm." Though Malcolm is old enough to have been on the battlefield. (Act I, Scene ii, lines 4-5).

Macbeth and Banquo are probably of the same age and Banquo has in Fleance an adult son.

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(v) Lady Macbeth's words that Macbeth is given to fits of absent-mindedness "from his youth." Act III, Scene iv, line 54 proves that he must be of ripe age.

(vi) Lady Macbeth's father was at the time of his death as old as Duncan, and Macbeth has already "lived long enough" and reached the autumn of his years (Act V, Scene iii, line 22-23).

Has Macbeth Children ?

In the play there is no hint whether Macbeth had any children. But there could be no good reason for Macbeth to take upon himself to defy fate (Act III, Scene i, 71-72) unless he had a son to succeed him (Act III, Scene i, 54). Our contention is that if Macbeth had no son to succeed, why should he be so anxious to get rid of Banquo ? The witches predicted that Banquo's descendants would be kings after Macbeth and Macbeth had no peace of mind, and even no nightly sleep until Banquo and his son had been murdered. From this it may be inferred that Macbeth expected to have children if he had none already (addressing Lady Macbeth he says, "bring forth men children only") ; again on three occasions in the play, he addresses his wife in the language of endearment, *e. g.*, ("dearest love," "dearest chuck," "sweet remembrancer") I.

It seems that Lady Macbeth has had children, or she could not have said, "I have given suck," but they might have been already dead, or they might have been by a previous husband. But Shakespeare does not definitely tell us that Macbeth married a widow ; then again the chroniclers agree that Lady Macbeth was first married to Gilcomgain, Thane of Moray, and had a son by him named, Lulach. There is a tradition that this Lulach was set up as King after Macbeth's death, but was also very soon defeated and slain by the forces of Malcolm ; others hold that he died along with Macbeth in the same battle. Verity writes on the point, "The very notion of children of such parents as Macbeth and his wife being alive—of their being, for instance, in another part of the castle while Macbeth was doing his murderous deed in another—is utterly repulsive. Moreover, it increases the wanton horror of Macbeth's crime against Duncan that he should have been prompted by sheer ambition for himself and wife alone."

The Third Murderer

The question who is the third murderer, has much exercised the minds of critics and readers. Some identify him with the "perfect spy-o' the time." (Act III, Scene i, 130) others, with the attendant whom Macbeth addresses (Act III, Scene i, 45) and who seems to have been taken into his confidence. Two critics have gone so far as to hold that Macbeth disguised himself as the third murderer ; and one commentator who has Ross on the brain is convinced that it must

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be Ross. Now in view of the real surprise and terror which Macbeth exhibits in the banquet-scene, it is extremely unlikely that he could have been the third murderer ; if he had done the deed himself, he would not have broken down in the way he did. We may sum up the argument for and against :—

(i) Although the banquet was at seven, Macbeth did not arrive till it was quite late—for a little after, the night was almost at odds with the morning." Shakespeare is never very careful about unities of time and place.

(ii) He enters the room immediately before the murderer does.

(iii) He is very anxious about his plot miscarrying.

(iv) If Macbeth had another confidant, it would have been the attendant who would have brought him the news of the murder. Macbeth had plenty of confidants, and if this one belonged to his own household, he would purposely keep him in the background.

(v) The twenty wounds on Banquo's head were more likely the work of one who hated him personally than that of hirelings. But the murderers were actually inspired by hatred of Banquo—Compare (Act III, Scene i, 115). And they had been instructed to be thorough in their work.

(vi) The third murderer knew the instructions, given to the other two, the nature of the ground and the habits of the visitors etc. He struck out the light to avoid recognition. But Macbeth would have been recognised by the other two before the light was extinguished ; and it is more likely that the first murderer, who says 'was it not the way ?' put out the light.

(vii) Macbeth speaks in a tone of levity with the murder in the banquet-scene, which he cannot do if he only knew that Banquo was dead. But 'then comes my fit again' and "there the growth serpent lies" do not suit this interpretation.

(viii) Macbeth's words, "Thou canst not say I did it," are equivalent to "In your black struggle you never could know me." These words are just the words a murderer by deputy would use ; to apply them to one of the actual murderer is absurd.

Macbeth and Richard III

These two plays have sometimes been compared. Both Macbeth and Richard III have a career of crime ; both are inspired by ambition ; both seize the thrones to which they have no right and revel in bloodshed : both are stricken with remorse at the end ; but there is a difference—Richard is deformed in body and, sensitive as he is on this point, he avenges himself upon humanity. Perhaps there is some excuse for Richard ; Richard has been a victim of the inferiority complex, and he commits a series of murders just to

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escape it. Macbeth, on the other hand, though endowed with imagination and sensibilities, is afflicted by a weak, and therefore, the witches as well as Lady Macbeth are able to have a strong hold upon him. Richard, as he goes through crime after crime, develops a devilish spirit absolutely callous to the consequences either to himself or to others ; Macbeth, too, later grows as desperate and reckless, but we cannot imagine that his conscience and his sensibilities were totally deadened. The fact is that Richard is painted as a monster of cruelty from the beginning and can claim little of our sympathy, whereas much of our sympathy is with Macbeth and we cannot but lament his degradation. Richard is a devil born, but Macbeth is a true and generous man who turns a devil. It should be noted that Macbeth retains something of humanity after he has been reeking with murder, and hearkens back to the days of innocent sleep, which are no more for him. Macbeth has greater affinity with Hamlet than with Richard. Macbeth invites comparsion with Richard because he has, like Richard, a series of murders to his credit—in fact he becomes a murderer and tyrant, and in his desperate efforts to keep the throne, he sticks at nothing. It may be said that Macbeth has a dual character—Macbeth before he is a murderer and Macbeth after he is a murderer. A great gulf separates the two. Macbeth before he is a murderer may go verily with Hamlet ; Macbeth after he is a murderer comes closer to Richard, though it must be admitted that glimpses of his better self appear again and again.

Macbeth and Hamlet

Macbeth and Hamlet have sometimes been compared. The supernatural elements in both the plays, having so much to do with the development of the action, invite this comparison. In *Hamlet* the ghost of Hamlet's father imposes upon a task of revenge,—a task which should have been considered as sacred by the son. But here a difference already appears ; Hamlet adores his father on this side of idolatry, bet judged by critics and readers ; in general, he fails to carry out the behest of his father's ghost ; the supernatural agency sets Hamlet on the task of revenge ; but fails to influence his conduct and action. In *Macbeth,* on the other hand, the supernatural nominates the whole action of the play. The witches control and direct Macbeth's will ; Macbeth has no will of his own. The prediction of the witches call forth his ambition, which was latent in him, and then Lady Macbeth's instigations drive him on to crime. Thus Macbeth is dominated by the witches and his wife. Hamlet does not surrender his will even to his father's ghost.

Macbeth seems to share partly Hamlet's imagination and keen sensibilities. They seem to hold Macbeth back from his crime for a time ; they make him see the 'air drawn' dagger and speculate about the future. Before Macbeth becomes a murderer he

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seems to have something of Hamlet's nature and character—Hamlet's vivid imagination, high-strung sensibilities, and speculative turn of mind. Macbeth has been predisposed to crime ; we cannot think of such a possibility in the case of Hamlet. This difference is also indicated : to Macbeth the supernatural soliciting comes to commit a crime : to Hamlet a supernatural soliciting comes to right a wrong—to avenge the murder of his father by his uncle and the dishonour done to his mother. Then again Macbeth, once a murderer, becomes quite callous, and revels in bloodshed and multiplies crime ; but Hamlet has a natural shrinking from bloodshed and murder—he happens to murder Polonius, the chief counsellor of his uncle, but he cannot help it. Macbeth does irreparable hurt to his soul by repeated crimes, and once a brave, generous and true-hearted hero, he becomes a tyrant, hated by everybody ; Hamlet retains to the end his refinement, his tenderness of heart and noble purity of the soul.

Yet one may say that Macbeth seems to foreshadow Hamlet —Macbeth with his wide-awake imagination, and possession of all noble and generous impulses before he has become a murderer. Hamlet may be said to be Macbeth intellectualised and sublimated.

Sources of Macbeth

In thinking of the sources of a play of Shakespeare we ought to be careful to understand the nature of his borrowings. He does not as a rule invent his plot, but takes it ready-made. To bring it into dramatic shape, he freely alters, and cuts out irrelevant details. It is in the process of shaping the story that his genius shows itself. The original story is changed beyond recognition, and Shakespeare breathes into it a new life. Often does he invent characters and new situation : then the story is enriched by fancy, humour and the gift of characterisation. Not too much emphasis need, therefore, be laid on his sources. In reconstructing the stories, Shakespeare simply discounts his sources. His own contributions are what should count at all— they are humour, wit, romantic sentiment, tragic issue, charming poetry, apt dialogue, pathos, masterly weaving and in weaving plot and under-plot, profound insight into character, etc.

The story of *Macbeth* to Shakespeare's play is a blend of fact, fable and fancy. Shakespeare mainly draws upon Holinshed's *Chronicles*. Holinshed mixes up both history and fiction in his narrative ; all that Holinshed attempts is to trade the royal dynasty of Scotland in unbroken line to Trojan ancestors through a mass of legends and investigations.

Other authorities that Shakespeare is supposed to have consulted are Andro's *Original Chronicle*, George Buchanan's *History of Scotland*. King James' *Demonology*. We are most concerned with

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Holinshed's *Chronicle* and Scott's *Discoverie of Witchcraft* in tracing Shakespeare's indebtedness.

First as to the relation of *Macbeth* to Scott's *Discoverie of Witchcraft* : Scott has a national and sceptical attitude towards the popular superstition of the day. He did not believe in witches, and ridiculed the popular belief. James I was himself superstitious and in his book he tried to show that people could be possessed by evil spirits. In this connection it should be noted that in 1590 there occurred in Scotland a series of cases in which witchcraft was the subject of investigation. Some of the facts and rumours might have dwelt in Shakespeare's memory. While Shakespeare seems to accept the popular supersition of the day, he exercises his idealising imagination. So the witches in *Macbeth* are powerful agents of fate or destiny, and differ from the witches of popular imagination ; physically they may be alike, but Shakespeare's witches possess greater powers not only over nature, but on the human soul.

It may first be pointed out how Shakespeare follows Holinshed. In his conception of Macbeth as a brave and successful general, on whom Duncan relied both for suppressing rebellion at home, and repelling invasion from abroad, Shakespeare is at once with Holinshed. In Holinshed as well as in Shakespeare, the three witches predict that Macbeth will be killed and Banquo's children will follow as future kings. There is a suggestion of Lady Macbeth's ambition in Holinshed and Shakespeare avails himself of it. It is Lady Macbeth who incises her husband to murder Duncan and Duncan's sons are suspected of parricide. In Holinshed too we find that natural portents and fierce gales Duncan's murder. The rest of the incidents are taken over by Shakespeare from Holinshed. Macbeth as king begins to suspect everyone, and by and by abandons all moral scruples. He fears that Banquo suspects him. The prophecy that Banquo's children would be kings, begins to work upon his mind. He succeeds in murdering Banquo, but his son, Fleance, escapes. Then Macbeth's suspicion turns to Macduff who runs away from Scotland. Macbeth murders Macduff's family. The amiguous promises of witches fill Macbeth into a sense of security. The long drawn out conversation between Malcolm and Macduff has been all taken from Holinshed. Finally, the overthrow of Macbeth's tyranny by Malcolm with the assistance of the King of England, is narrated in detail by Holinshed, and Shakespeare does not alter it at all. Shakespeare's greatness appears in his deviations from Holinshed. First, we may note the deviation in incident. These deviations were justified by the dramatic necessity. Holinshed speaks of a revolt by Macdonwald, a subsequent invasion by Sweno, and a still later attack by Canute. The three incidents are run together by Shakespeare for the sake of compactness and for

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heightening Macbeth's greatness by exaggerating the danger to Scotland. In Holinshed, Macdonwald slays himself. Shakespeare makes Macbeth kill Macdonwald in battle. The details of the murder of King Duff by Macdonwald, as given by Holinashed, are transferred to the murder of Duncan by Macbeth. Duff is murdered by four of hirelings whereas Macbeth himself murders Duncan. To the crimes of treason and murder, Macbeth adds an outrageous violation of hospitality. This serves to intensify the horror of the play. The horrible imaginings of Macbeth may have been partly suggested by Holinshed's accounts of King Kenneth's mental troubles arising out of his murder of his nephew Malcolm. In Holinshed Banquo is murdered after the banquet, in Shakespeare before the banquet. This renders possible Lady Macbeth's superb acting in the Banquet-hall. In Holinshed, Macbeth reigns for 17 years ; in Shakespeare the movement of the time seems to be much quicker, and though there may be a hint here and there of the lapse of a fairly long period of time, Shakespeare seems to crowd events together, such as, the death of Banquo, the murder of Macduff's wife and children, followed by the retribution upon Macbeth.

The deviations in characterisation are no less important. Holinshed paints Macbeth of a brave soldier and able administrator, who rules firmly but justly, promoting peace and prosperity. Shakespeare does not certainly represent Macbeth as a villain from the beginning as some critics assume. In the beginning, we see that Macbeth is endowed with imagination and keen sensibilities. There are subtle touches in the portrait of Macbeth. He struggles hard with dual temptation from the witches aud Lady Macbeth. Holinshed shows Banquo as his ally ; he is not bothered with any scruples when he commits the murder. In Holinshed, Duncan is represented as a weak and inefficient King. While a Holinshed Duncan is young, in Shakespeare he is old, and is shown to be a gracious and kind-hearted king. Shakespeare thus exalts Duncan and blackens Macbeth's character. Then again Shakespeare provides Banquo as a foil to Macbeth. In Holinshed, Banquo is an accomplice of Macbeth. Shakespeare preserves Banquo from this stain. Banquo is the ancestor of the Stuarts—a compliment which Shakespeare pays to James I ; so it is necessary to ennoble and exault Banquo's character. In Holinshed there is no other hint about Lady Macbeth than that she is ambitious. Shakespeare found that Donwald's wife incited her husband to murder the King Duff and blends the two characters into one in Lady Macbeth. Lastly, Holinshed's witches are the ordinary hags, blear-eyed, capable of doing mischief to men and cattle by the influence of their evil-eye. But Shakespeare's witches have grandeur about them. They are the agents of fate or destiny.

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Tabular Statements of Shakespeare's Borrowings and Devitations from Holinshed

Act I : Scene 1.

Deviation :—Holinshed introduces the witches *after*, Shakespeare, *before* the battle.

Act I : Scene 2.

Borrowings :—Macdonwald's rebellion, Sweno's invasion and Cawdor's treachery.

Deviations :—But they are run together. Macbeth himself kills Macdonwald. No mention is made of Canute's invasion and of Duncan's personally taking the field against Sweno. Cawdor is made to assist Sweno and Macdonwald.

Act I : Scene 3.

Borrowings :—The three hails of the witches ; Banquo's address to the witches ; hints of the conversation between Macbeth and Banquo.

Act I : Scene 4.

Borrowings :—Malcolm's investiture as heir-apparent ; Duncan's visit to Macbeth's Castle (based on Duff's stay at Donwald's residence).

Act I : Scene 5.

Borrowings :—Lady Macbeth's desire to be Queen ; her incitement of her husband : Donwald's wife's suggestion that her husband should murder Duff.

Act I : Scene 6.

Borrowings :—King Duff trusts Donwald and visits his castle frequently.

Act I : Scene 7.

Borrowings :—Donwald's wife advises him to murder Duff and suggests how he should do it : Donwald takes her advice ; the two drunken and overslept Chamberlains.

Act II : Scene 1.

Borrowings :—Duff distributes gift to Donwald and others.

Deviation :—Lady Macbeth is the recipent of a gift.

Act II : Scene 2.

Deviation :—Duff is murdered by four servants of Donwald ; Duncan by Macbeth himself.

Act II : Scene 3.

Borrowings :—The murder of the two Chamberlains as a precaution ; the horror of Macbeth ; the fight of Malcolm and Donalbain.

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Deviation :—Malcolm goes to England and Donalbain to Ireland.

Act II : Scene 4.

Borrowings :—Signs and portents and unnatural darkness after the King's murder ; The burial at Colme-Kill ; Macbeth's Coronation at Scone.

Act III : Scene 1.

Borrowings :—Macbeth suspects Banquo and engages assassins to murder both Banquo and Fleance.

Act III . Scene 2.

Not based on Holinshed.

Act III : Scene 3.

Borrowings :—The plan of murdering Banquo and Fleance at some distance from the palace ; anxiety lest suspicion should fell on Macbeth.

Deviation :—The murder takes place before (not after) the banquet.

Act III : Scene 4.

Borrowings :—Macbeth is angry with and afraid of Macduff ; he engages spies in every noble's home.

Deviation :—The introduction of Banquo's ghost.

Act III : Scene 5.

Not based on Holinshed.

Act III : Scene 6.

Borrowings :—Suspicions are roused against the King. The nobles are afraid to condemn him openly. Macduff escapes to England.

Act IV : Scene 1.

Borrowings :—Macbeth's deep faith in the prophecies and predictions regarding himself.

Act IV : Scene 2.

Borrowings :—The seizure of Macduff's Castle ; the slaying of his wife and children and of the other inmates of castle.

Act IV : Scene 3.

Borrowings :—Practically, the whole coversation between Malcolm and Macduff ; Edward the Confessor's sympathy with Malcolm and his instructions to Siward to march on Scotland with soldiers.

Deviations :—Ross comes to inform Macduff of the murder of his wife and children : Macduff's grief.

Act V : Scene 1.

Not based on Holinshed.

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Act V : Scene 2.

Borrowings :— Macbeth shuts himself in Dunsinane Castle. His followers desert him and Siward invades Scotland.

Act V : Scene 3.

Borrowings :—Macbeth is still confident of success— so blind is his reliance on the predictions.

Act V : Scene 4.

Borrowings :—The incident on the moving wood.

Act V : Scene 5.

Borrowings :—Macbeth rallies out of the fortress.

Act V : Scene 6.

Not based on Holinshed.

Act V : Scene 7.

Borrowings :—The death of young Siward.

Act V : Scene 8.

Borrowings :—Duel between Macbeth and Macduff ; manner of young Siward's death cold ; Siward's eulogy on his dead son.

Deviations :—Macbeth fights Macduff and is slain at Dunsinane (instead of flying before Macduff and being overtaken and slain at Lumphanan).

Historical Basis of the Play

It has been pointed out that Holished is not accurate in his narrative as a historian should be. And from the analysis of Sakespeare's borrowings and deviations, it is evident that Shakespeare has taken liberties with Holinshed's narrative. It is, therefore, necessary to give a short account of the actual historical facts, to which *Macbeth* refers.

Macbeth was the son of Finlay (Finnleach), the Mormaer (*i. e.* , Sub-king) or Ross—not thane of (Glamis)—by Doada, daughter of Malcolm II. When Finlay was killed about 1020, in an encounter with Malcolm II, it gave rise to a blood feud between Macbeth and Duncan, the successor of Malcolm II. He married Gruoch, the widow of Gilcomgin, Mormaer of Moray : and during the infancy of his step-son, Lulach, became the Mormaer of Moray. When Thorfinn, the Earl of Caithness, was in arms against Duncan, Macbeth, then the Commander of Duncan's forces, went over to the enemy and treacherously murdered Duncan at Bothgowanan, near Elgin in 1040. He then divided the kingdom with Thorfinn, taking for himself the districts south and west of the Tay and the central district in which Scone was situated. He curshed an insurrection by Crinan, the father of Duncan, and ruled justly and ably for 17

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years. His benefactions to the church were remarkable. He represented the Celtic and northern element of the population as against Duncan and his family who were taking Saxon wives and gradually adopting Saxon manners. In 1054, Siward, Earl of Northumbria, with the consent of Edward the Confessor, attacked Scotland and defeated Macbeth on July 27. Macbeth retired to north and Siward was able to establish Malcolm III as King of Cumbria. In 1057, when both Siward and Macbeth's powerful ally, Thorfinn, were dead. Malcolm attacked Macbeth who was slain at Laumphanan (in Mar) on August 15. Lady Macbeth was the daughter of Boete, the son of Kenneth III, who was deposed and slain by Malcolm II. According to the rule of tanistry, the succession ought to have reverted to her father's family after the death of Malcolm I, but the latter murdered her only brother—he had probably murdered her father previously—in order to place Duncan on the throne. Her first husband was Gilcomgain, Mormaer of Moray, a powerful Prince. Malcolm II surprised him in his castle and murdered him with 50 of his followers. Lady Macbeth escaped with her infant son, Lulach, to Ross, and subsequently married Macbeth, the Mormaer of the province. Like Macbeth she had, therefore, blood to avenge on the successor of Malcolm II.

Duncan I was son of Crinan, the lay Abbot of Dunkeld by Beatrice (or Bethoc) a daughter of Malcolm II. In 1034, he succeeded his maternal grandfather on the throne, thus violating the principle of alternate succession from the two branches of the royal family. He invaded Northumbria but was beaten back. He then went to north and tried to dispose his cousin. Thorfinn, Earl of Caithness, but was defeated both on land and sea. His General, Macbeth, went over to Thorfinn's side and slew him treacherously. He married a daughter of Siward, Earl of Northumbria. Malcolm III (surnamed Canmore of Big-Head) was the eldest son of Duncan I. After his father's murder, he first took refuge with his grandfather and then went over to England. Edward the Confessor espoused his cause. Siward was sent to attack Scotland. Macbeth was defeated near Dunsinane in 1054, Malcolm becoming King of the Southern districts. In 1057, Malcolm attacked Macbeth and slew him at Lumphanan. A few months later, when revolt by Lulach, the step-son of Macbeth, has been crushed on April 3, he was undisputed King of Scotland, and was crowned at Scone on April 25, 1057. He first married Ingibrorg, the widow of Thorfinn and then Margaret, a sister of Edger Atheling. He is described as an able king and a bold and fearless warrior ; but he is represented as possessing kindliness of disposition and frank generosity.

Banquo and Fleance are not known to history ; nor is there any definite mention of Macduff and Lady Macduff in any authoritative history. Nothing is known to Cawdor and his treachery though it may be a confussion due to either the rebellion of Gilcom-

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gain in 1033, or the defiant conduct of Thorfinn. Sweno, King of Norway, did not invade Scotland during Duncan's reign. Canute has invaded Scotland in 1031, and forced Malcolm to admit his superiority. There is no historical authority for Lady Macbeth's suicide.

CHARACTERS OF THE PLAY

Macbeth

With exception to that of Hamlet, the character of Macbeth is the most complex one that Shakespeare has ever portrayed. It is complex in the sense that Macbeth's motives cannot be clearly analysed and labelled. Fletcher writes, "A character, like this, of extreme selfisness, but a most irritable fancy must produce, even in ordinary circumstances, an excess of morbid apprehensiveness ; which, however, as we see in him, is not inconsistent with the greatest physical courage, but generates out of necessity the most entire moral cowardice. When, therefore, a man like this, ill enough qualified even for the honest and straighforward transactions of life, has brought himself to snatch at an ambitious object by the commission of one great sanguinary crime, the new and false position in which he finds himself by his every success will but startle and exasperate him to escape from 'horrible imaginings' by the perpetration of greater and actual horrors, till inevitable destruction comes upon him amidst universal excretion." In his estimate of Macbeth's character, Fletcher ignores certain other traits, which may represent Macbeth better. Macbeth's imagination and sensibilities are better elements in his character ; it has been noted above that they hold him back from crime in the beginning. His hesitation, in view of his vaulting ambition, cannot be otherwise explained. His ambition seems to draw him to crime, far through no other way. Fletcher simply ignores the conflict in Macbeth's mind before he surrenders to the suggestions of the witches and the instigation of his wife. We pity Macbeth and lament his fall because he has elements of greatness in him, though later evil predominates, and conquers all that is good in him. We may note the following traits in Macbeth's character :—

(*i*) *His Ambition*—Ambition seems to have been latent in Macbeth : it is called forth by the predictions of the witches, and it begins to take definite shape when Lady Macbeth studies his wavering purpose by the valour of her tongue. Macbeth himself is aware of this ambition ; he confesses :

> "I have no spur,
> To prick the sides of my intent, but only
> Vaulting ambition, which o'erleaps itself,
> And falls on the other."

Yet his ambition might not have been strong enough by itself to tempt him to crime. His better self, composed as it was of shaping imagination and keen sensibilities, might have restrained

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the baser impulse. His weakness of will is more responsible for his crime.

(*ii*) *His Weakness of Will*—Macbeth is certainly a great soldier, a loyal and devoted subject of Duncan, and we may well believe, he deserves the praise and gratitude of the King. He might have cherished ambition in his heart. But if let of himself, we cannot believe that he could have raised his murderous hand against the King. He recognises that,

> "This Duncan
> Hath borne his faculties so meek, hath been
> So clear in his great office, that his virtues
> Will plead like angels trumpet—tongu'd against,
> The deep dimension of his taking-off."

Yet, why is Macbeth rushed into crime ? First, the witches exercise a subtle influence upon him ; now the witches can have no power upon a person who has a strong will of his own, and does not let himself be seduced by evil. It is Macbeth's weakness of will that throws him into the power of the witches, then into that of Lady Macbeth. The witches and Lady Macbeth are agents of evil, and Macbeth readily surrenders to their influence.

(*iii*) *His Imagination*—Macbeth has been a man of strong and vivid imagination ; and a man in whom the imagination is so strong cannot be wholly bad. Even if we suppose that he had guilty thought in his mind, when he met the witches, his imagination does visualise it, and makes him quail before the crime :

> "If good, why do I yield to that suggestion
> Whose horrid image doth unfix my hair,
> And make my seated heart knock at my ribs,
> Against the use of nature ? Present fears
> Are less than horrible imaginings ;
> My thought, whose murder yet is but fantastical,
> Shakes so my single state of man that function,
> Is smother'd in sunrise and nothing is,
> But what is not."

We ought not to forget that Macbeth experiences great searching, of the heart before he agrees to commit the murder. His imagination might have been his saving grace ; even when proceeding to the bed-chamber of Duncan he cannot repress the startling image of murder that rises before his eyes. He seems to be led on by a phantom dagger. He is conscious that this dagger is a "fatal vision" a false creation proceeding from the heart-oppressed brain." He fortifies himself with the thought :

> "There's no such thing ;
> It is the bloody business which informs
> Thus to mine eyes."

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He is dominated and tyrannised by the imagination. Even when he has been hardened and coarsened by crime, he cannot repress the imagination in him.

(iv) His Tyranny—Macbeth fulfils his ambition by murdering his king, and then to secure his throne he commits further murders—first Banquo then Macduff's wife and children. The crime with which he opens his career of ambition has a coarsening effect upon his nature. Naturally he begins to rule as a tyrant, and alienates his courtiers and subjects. The effect of his tyranny is shown on the eve of the invision of Scotland by Malcolm with an English army. There are daily reports of the desertion of his Thane, Macbeth himself, with his keen sensibilities, not yet dulled by crime, has a poignant feeling of it. Despair seizes his heart :

"My way of life
Is fall'n into the sear, the yellow leaf ;
And that which should accompany old age,
As honour, love, obedience, troops of friends,
I must not look to have ; but, in their stead,
Courses, not loud but deep, month-honour, breath,
Which the poor heart would fain deny, and dear not."

Angus refers to this desertion of the Thanes, and its effect upon Macbeth :

"Now does he feel.
His secret murders sticking on his hand's ;
Now minutely revolts upbraid his faith-breach ;
Those he commands move only in command,
Nothing in love."

Malcolm, the English court, keeps himself well-informed of the condition of his country :

"I think our country sinks beneath the yoke,
It weeps, it bleeds, and each new day a gash,
Is added to her wounds."

When Rose comes to England and sees Malcolm, he has the same story to tell :

"Alas ! poor country ;
Almost afraid to know itself. It cannot
Be call'd our mother, but our grave ; where nothing,
But who knows nothing, is once seen to smile :
Where signs and groans and shrieks that rent the air
Are made, not mark'd where violent sorrow seems
A murder ecstacy ; the dead men's knell,
Is there scarce ask'd for who ; and good men's lives
Expire before the flowers in their caps,
Dying of ere they sicken."

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The graphic account of Macbeth's tyranny, indirectly suggests the disaffection of the people and foreshadow their final revolt. In fact Macbeth's downfall is brought about by his crimes and acts of tyranny.

(Hudson on Macbeth)

"Macbeth's doubts and difficulties, his shrinkings and misgivings spring from the peculiar structure and movement of his intellect, as sympathetically inflamed and wrought upon by the poison of meditated guilt. His whole state of man suffers an insurrection ; conscience forthwith sets his understanding and imagination, into morbid, irregular, conclusive action, in so much that the former disappears in the tempestuous agitation of thought which itself stirs up his will is buffeted and staggered with prudential reasonings and fantastical terrors both of which are self generated out of his disordered and unnatural state of mind. Here begins his long and fatal course of self-delusion. He misderives his scruples, misplaces his apprehensions, mistranslates the whispers and writings of conscience into the suggestions of prudence, the forecastings of reason, the threatenings of danger. His strong and excitable imagination, set on fire of conscience, fascinates and spell-bounds the other faculties, and so gives an objective force and effects to its internal workings. Under this guilt-begotten hallucination "present fears are less than horrible imaginings." Thus, instead of acting directly in the form of remorse, conscience comes to set circuitously through imaginary terrors, which again reacts on the conscience as fire is kept burning by the current of air which itself generates. Hence his apparent freedom from compunctous visiting even when he is really most subject to them.

It is probably from oversight of this that some have set him down as a timid, cautious, remorseless villain, withhold from crime, only by shrinking, selfish apprehensiveness. He does indeed seem strangely dead to the guilt and morbidly alive to the dangers of the enterprise ; free from remorses of concience, and filled with imaginary fears but whence his uncontrollable irritability of imagination ; how comes it that his mind so swarms with horrible imagining, but that his imagination itself is set on fire of hell ? So that he seems remorseless, because in his mind the agonies of remorse project and translate into the spectres of a conscience stricken imagination."

(Irving on Macbeth)

"We are sometimes told that Shakespeare did not intend to make Macbeth a psychological study ; he did make him so, and it in sufficient that we find his intent in the result.....The poetic mind on which the passages and suggestions of supernatural things could work ; a nature sensitive, intellectual emotion, so that one can imagine him even in his contemplation of coming crimes,

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weeping for the pain of the destined victim ; self-torturing, self-examination, playing with conscience ; so that action and reaction of poetic thought might send emotional waves through the brain while the resolution was as grimly fixed as steel and the heart as cold as ice ; a poet supreme in the power of words, with vivid imagination glowing sympathy of intellect ; a villain, cold-blooded, selfish, remorseless, with the true villain's nerve and callousness when pressed to evil work, and the physical heroism of those who are born to kill ; a moral nature with only sufficient weakness to quail momentarily before superstitious terrors ; a man of sentiment and not of feeling—such was the mighty dramatic character which Shakespeare gave to the world in Macbeth."

Lady Macbeth

Readers are apt to misunderstand the character of Lady Macbeth. She has been more vilified than she deserves.

Whatever may have been the faults of Lady Macbeth, she never ceases to be a woman. She is fired by ambition, as much as, if not more than Macbeth himself. The difference between the two is that Lady Macbeth is not at all deterred by scruples —being more impulsive, while her husband is more thoughtful and imaginative. It may be true that if Macbeth had been let alone by his wife, he might not have pursued a career of crime. Lady Macbeth has been compared as another witch, more diabolical, because possessing the gracious human form, with an irresistible valour to tongue. Lady Macbeth does certainly instigate her husband to the act of murder, and with her chiding tongue, sweeps away all his scruples. It ought to be admitted that Macbeth's weakness of will gives his wife such an ascendency over him. It is useless to debate the point whether Macbeth should have resisted his wife's suggestions, and kept his soul untainted by crime. Macbeth's weakness of will is temperamental and there is no getting away from it. What should strike every reader of the play, is Lady Macbeth's love for her husband and her exclusive devotion to his material interests. So Lady Macbeth is ambitious for the sake of her husband. In order to enable her husband to achieve ambition, she actually goes through a process of unsexing herself. In the first instance she plans with her husband the murder of Duncan ; in fact she takes the initiative in it. So revulsion comes to her immediately after the murder when Macbeth himself appears partly demented by the horror of the deed, when he seems to hear a voice, forbidding sleep, for he has murdered innocent sleep. Macbeth's sense of horror has at first little effect upon Lady Macbeth. Her strength of will and endurance must have been remarkable for a woman. It is her iron-will that carries her through all the terrors which her husband experiences. She keeps her nerve at the Banquet Scene when Banquo's ghost suddenly appears and shakes Macbeth with uncontrollable fear. But her outraged

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conscience and sex begin to have their revenge upon her. The strain has been too much of her. Macbeth's nature and sensibilities are coarsened and hardened by crime, but after the murder of Duncan, Lady Macbeth drifts apart from her husband.

We may imagine that she must have brooded over her participation in her husband's first crime—the murder of Duncan, and nemesis soon comes down upon her. Her sleep-walking is the reaction of the guilt upon her. That Lady Macbeth suffered in secret, and was a prey to guilty conscience, shows that she never ceased to be a woman. She sacrificed herself for her love to her husband.

(*i*) *Her Essentially Feminine Nature*—Lady Macbeth has been ambitious, and instigates her husband into the act of crime. But for her reproaches and her challenging Macbeth's love, Macbeth might not have launched into crime, makes up her mind as to the course of action to be followed. She knows better than Macbeth that the way to the throne lies through murder, and she knows also that she will have to take the initiative in the matter :

"The raven himself is hoarse
That croaks the fatal entrance of Duncan
Under my battlements. Come, you spirits,
That tend on mortal thoughts, unsex me here,
And fill me, from the crown to the toe, top full
Of direst cruelty ! make thick my blood ;
Stop up the access and passage to remorse,
That no compunctious visitings of nature
Shake my fell purpose, nor keep peace between
The effect and it ! Come to my woman's breasts,
And take my milk for gall, you murdering ministers,
Wherever in your sightless substances
You wait on nature's mischief ?"

In this invocation to "spirits that tend of mortal thoughts," Lady Macbeth under takes a task which is more than a woman can accomplish. She prays to the powers of evil that she may be unsexed, but we doubt very much if she has ever been successful in unsexing herself. For the moment she is carried away by her impulse, and as she proposes to do with the "valour" of her tongue, she hustles her husband through the act of murder.

But disillusionment soon comes to her :

"Nought's had, all's spent
Where our desire is got without content :
'Tis safer to be that which we destroy
Than by destruction—dwell in doubtful joy."

She also realises that she has done little good to her husband by instigating him into the act of crime, as she notices her husband's distracted looks :

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"How now my lord ! why do you keep alone,
Of sorriest fancies your companions making,
Using those thoughts which should have died
With them they think on ?"

The point is that her unsexing of herself has been temporary ; the woman reasserts in her.

(*ii*) *Her Love for Her Husband*—Lady Macbeth is not a devilish woman. It is her love for her husband, which leads her to crime. Lady Macbeth has just been Eve over again. She knows her husband better than anybody else, and she knows that her husband is ambitious without strength of will and purpose enough to achieve it. In her love for her husband, she braces herself up to the task of fulfilling her husband's ambition. So great is her devotion to her husband that she is even prepared to renounce her womanly nature, and to assume the role of a stern task-mistress, she overstrains herself in the interest of her husband, and the result is a total breakdown. Her love prompts her to undertake more than what a woman can accomplish. However she unsexes herself, she is unable to renounce her womanly nature, and after the first crime, she keeps apart from her husband. She suffers in loneliness, and when it becomes too much for her—a frail woman to bear, she dies by violent means. Lady Macbeth is not a wicked woman : she sacrifices for her husband.

(*iii*) *Her Resourcefulness*—Lady Macbeth is certainly more resourceful than her husband. It is she who takes the initiative, plans the murder of Duncan, and even partly assists Macbeth in carrying out the plot. After the act of murder, Macbeth loses all control over himself, and is tormented by imaginative terrors. It is Lady Macbeth then who comes to his help :

"Why worthy Thane,
You do unbend your noble strength to think
So brain-sickly of things. Go get some water.
And wash this filthy witness from your hand."

Lady Macbeth is a realist, and takes the most practical view of things. She carries away the daggers that Macbeth has brought with himself after murdering Duncan. Her husband shudders to go back to the death-chamber again to deposit the daggers. Lady Macbeth cries :

"Give me the daggers ; the sleeping and the dead
Are but as pictures : 'tis the eye of childhood
The fears as painted devil. If he do bleed,
I'll gild the faces of the grooms withal ;
It must seem their guilt."

So Lady Macbeth goes back to the death-chamber to put the daggers there. In the meantime her husband is perturbed by a

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knocking within. Lady Macbeth soon rejoins him and drags him to their bed-chamber. Macbeth seems to be so much unbalanced that he would have easily betrayed himself to Macduff and Lennox when they called in the morning. At a critical moment she is always by the side of her husband. At the Banquet Scene when Banquo's ghost, seen by nobody else, shakes his "gory looks" at him, Macbeth seems to be little conscious what he is speaking out ; Lady Macbeth, resourceful as she is, covers up the raving terror of her husband, and saves him from self-betrayal.

(*iv*) *Her Nervous Breakdown*—Girvinus writes, "When the deed is accomplished, she stands, at first, still, while Macbeth now begins to push on with bolder strides. But when none of the expctations are realised which she expected as the result of the deed when instead of successful greatness, ruin of the land and of her consort follows her powers suddenly relax and sink. Supported by him she could have long and for ever withstood the emotions of conscience, nature, and a harrowing imagination ; but doubting him, she doubts herself also.....Still, even now her character and the strength of her will are evident ; her resistance in suffering is now as apparent as before her activity in doing. By day she continues mistress of her emotions, but in the night 'her secret-infected mind to the deaf pillow will discharge its secrets.' According to the poet's poetic physiology and psychology, her unnaturally strained conscience and power of dissimulation avenge themselves during sleep, and the somnambulist, self-betraying acts, as it were all the secret, guilty scenes over again. Once she thought she could with a little water clear away the witnesses of that deed but now, in the torture of her hardened heart, she complains with groans of anguish that the smell and stain of blood will never wash away. She ends her life with suicide."

(Mrs. Jameson on Lady Macbeth)

'It is particularly observable that in Lady Macbeth's concentrated, strong-nerved ambition, the ruling passion of her mind, there is yet a touch of womanhood ; she is ambitious less for himself than for her husband. It is fair to think this because we have no reason to draw any other inference either from her words or her actions. In her famous soliloquy, after reading her husband's letter, she does not once refer to herself. It is of him she thinks ; she wishes to see her husband on the throne and to place sceptre within his grasp. The strength of her affection adds strength to her ambition. Although in the old story of Boethius, we are told that the wife of Macbeth "burned with unquenchable desire to bear the name of queen."

Yet in the aspect under which Shakespeare has represented the character to us the selfish part of this ambition is kept out of

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sight. We must remark also, that in Lady Macbeth's reflections on her husband's character, and on that milkiness of nature which she fears "may impede him from the golden round," there is no indication of female scorn ; there is exceeding pride but no egotism, in the sentiment or expression ; no want of wifely or womanly respect or love for him, but, on the contrary, a sort of unconsciousness of her own mental superiority, which she betrays rather than asserts, as interesting in itself as it is most admirably conceived and delineated. Nor is there anything vulgar in her ambition ; as the strength of her affections lends to it something profound and concentrated, so her splendid imagination invests the object of her desire with its own radiance. We cannot trace in her grand and capacious mind that it is the mere bubbles and trappings of royalty which dazzle and allure her : hers is the sin of the "star-bright apostate," and she plunges with her husband into the abyss of guilt to procure for all their days and nights sole sovereign sway and masterdom." She reveals, she luxuriates, in her dream of power. She reaches at the golden diadem which is to sear brain ; she perils life and soul for its attainment, with her enthusiasm as perfect, a faith as settled, as that of the martyr who sees at the stark heaven and its crowns of glory opening upon him.....

Lady Macbeth having proposed the object to herself, and arrayed it with an ideal glory, fixed her eye steadily upon it, soars far above all womanish feelings and scruples to attain in, and stoops upon her victim with the strength and velocity of a vulture, but having committed unflinchingly the crime necessary for the attainment of her purpose, she stops there. After the murder of Duncan, we see Lady Macbeth, during the rest of the play, occupied in supporting the nervous weakness and sustaining the fortitude of her own husband.....but she is nowhere represented as urging him on to new crimes ; so far from it that, when Macbeth darkly hints its purposed assassination of Banquo, and she inquires his meaning—he replies :

"Be innocent of the knowledge, dearest chuck,
Till thou approve the deed."

The same may be said of the destruction of Macduff's family. Everyone must perceive how our detestation of the woman had been increased, she had been placed before us as suggesting and abetting those additional cruelties into which Macbeth is hurried by his mental cowardice.

Lastly, it is clear that in a mind constituted like that of Lady Macbeth conscience must wake some time or other, and bring with it remorse closed by despair by death. This great moral retribution was to be displayed to us—but how ? Lady Macbeth is not a woman to start at shadows ; she mocks at air-drawn daggers ; she sees no imagined spectres rise from the tomb to appeal or accuse

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her. The towering bravery of her mind disdains the visionary terrors which haunt her weaker husband. We know, or rather feel, that she could give a voice to the most direful intend, and call on the spirits that wait on moral thoughts to "unsex her" and "stop up all access and passage of remorse"—to that remorse would have been nor tongue nor sound ; and that rather than have uttered a complaint, she would have held her breath and died. To have given her a confident, though in the partner to her guilt, would have been a degrading resource, and have disappointed and enfeeble all our previous impressions of her character : yet justice is to be done, and we are to be made acquainted with that which the woman herself would have suffered a thousand deaths rather than have betrayed. In the sleeping scene we have a glimpse into the depths of that inward hell."

(Macbeth and Lady Macbeth Contrasted)

1. They both are ambitious, but the ambition of each springs from different causes. Macbeth is wholly egoistic ; he thinks only of the greatness that will be his in future. His wife, on the other hand, cherishes ambition for herself but for the sake of her husband. All that she desires is to shine in the glory reflected from her husband. Her ambition is subordinate to her love and devotion to her husband.

2. While Macbeth is a prey to an excitable imagination, his wife is a realist, and has pre-eminently a practical turn of mind. Macbeth is a creature of sentiment, but his wife is endowed with level-headed commonsense. While Macbeth is vacillating and undecided, his wife has a grim tenacity which carries everything before it.

3. Macbeth is afraid of consequences. His wife has little to do with misgivings. Macbeth desires to have a crown by means other than fair and blameless, but he has not the nerve or hardihood to attain it. Lady Macbeth, with her practical and resourceful mind, at once renounces her womanly nature and all tenderness of feeling invokes the powers of evil to aid her and give her strength in crime.

4. In criminal moments Macbeth does not seem to be sure of himself unless he can throw himself into vigorous action that will repress all his fancies. But Lady Macbeth is always self-possessed, and knows that she is thinking about, and makes her husband act as the occasion demands.

5. Macbeth may not have a very keen moral conscience ; but his delicate sensibilities and imagination come very near it. So he cannot violate the dictates of conscience without suffering pangs of remorse. In Lady Macbeth intelligence dominates her imagina-

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tion. So when she decides that a certain course of action is desirable from the point of view of the result it will bring, she bothers little about the wickedness of that action. This accounts for the different forms in which they are punished for their crimes. Macbeth, whose passionate fancies once drove him to the verge of madness, begins to repress his imagination as his conscience becomes deadened. Later he shakes of his initial fear and ultimately forgets the very taste of fear. Lady Macbeth, a woman of iron-nerve and strong commonsense, is later unhinged in mind, and falls a prey to the suppressed images of terror, called by her diseased fancy. So it is through the imagination that retribution is meted out to her. If Macbeth had his wife's commonsense and strength of will, he would have never given way to temptation.

If his wife had his imagination, she would have never acted as temptress. Instead of each saving the other, both co-operated in bringing about each other's downfall.

(Bradley sums up the Contrast in these Words)

"These two characters are fired by one and the same passion of ambition ; and to a considerable extent they are alike. The disposition of each is highly proud and commanding. They are born to rule, if not to reign. They are peremptory or contemptuous to their inferiors. They are not children of the high, like Brutus and Hamlet : they are of the world. We observe in them no love of country, and no interest in the welfare of any one outside their family. Their habitual thoughts and aims are, and, we imagine, long have been, all of station and power. And though in both there is something, and in one much, of what is higher honour, conscience, humanity—they did not live consciously in the light of these things or speak their language. Not that they are egoists, like Iago or if they are egoists, their is an *egoisme a deux* (*i. e.*, an ego ism for two). They have no separate ambitions. They support and love one another. They suffer together. And if, as time goes on, they drift a little apart, they are not vulgar souls, to be alienated and recriminate when they experience the fruitlessness of their ambition. They remain to the end tragic, even grand.

"So far there is much a likeness between them. Otherwise they are contrasted, and the action is built upon this contrast. Their attitudes towards the projected murder of Duncan are quite different, and it produces in them equally different effects. In consequence, they appear in the earlier part of the play as of equal importance, if indeed Lady Macbeth does not overshadow her husband, but afterwards she retires more and more into the background, and he becomes unmistakably the leading figure. His is indeed far the more complex character."

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(The Contrast Between Macbeth and Lady Macbeth is Summed Up by Moulton thus)

1. ',Macbeth lives in the world of practical action, the sphere of making and doing ; Lady Macbeth lives an inner intellectual life, in which her powers are turned inward upon herself.

2. "Macbeth's nobility is coventional ; it means no more than virtuous education and surroundings. His soliloquy is of an eminently practical character. He rises with external deeds and sinks with internal conflicts. The two flaws in his character are his superstition and helplessness under suspense.

Lady Macbeth stands forth as an embodiment of the inner life ; she has a quick, delicate, sensitive soul—not hardened for the working-day world. She does not lack the softer qualities, but she struggles against them and succeeds in representing them.

3. The original impluse to evil came from Macbeth, but his wife's firm nature kept him to the path of wickedness from which he might have recoiled.

4. The 'supernatural soliciting' comes as a shock to Macbeth ; but it makes no impression on his wife. When after the temptation, husband and wife meet, Macbeth is almost helpless because it is the stage of suspense ; his wife, who has, a better hold of her mental faculties, suggests a practical scheme for carrying out the murder and evading suspicion, and thereby nerves the practical man of action.

5. When the crime has to be actually committed, Lady Macbeth displays her feminine weakness. She has to take stimulants to brace up her nerves. With a repugnance, scarcely disguised, she carries back the daggers. Macbeth, with the characteristic directness of the practical man, rushes through the part allotted to him ; but is unnerved when hearing voices in the night, he reads into the words he hears ominous meanings.

6. "In the Scene of the Discovery, Macbeth is perfectly at home : energetic action is needed, and he is dealing with the men. Lady Macbeth goes near to suggesting a personal interest in the crime by her over-anxiety to disclaim it." Macbeth blundered by killing the grooms and spoiling his wife's plan ; Lady Macbeth retrieves the position by fainting at the critical moment.

7. After becoming king, Macbeth becomes impatient to kill Banquo, and therein commits another blunder. Lady Macbeth would have waited for a suilable opportunity to get rid of Banquo. Macbeth understands this ; but finding it a severe strain to wait, he plans murder without consulting his wife. Under the strain of long concealment of the crime, Macbeth would have broken down, but not so his wife.

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8. Macbeth surrenders to the supernatural ; and the first shock of nemesis comes from the supernatural—the ghost of Banquo. Lady Macbeth is true to her character and boldly faces the double task of keeping up appearances for herself and for her husband. Macbeth is first unmanned, but recovers himself when the ghost finally disappears. Lady Macbeth bears herself up in the presence of the guests, but feels exhausted after they have departed.

9. To Lady Macbeth, who has faced every crisis by sheer force of nerve, the final nemesis come fitly in the shape of madness. Macbeth, the practical man, finds nemesis in an "old age that receives no honour from others," and the ruthless demonstration of his folly in relying on the equivocating witches.

Banquo

Banquo is meant to be a foil to Macbeth. The King says that both Macbeth and Banquo have equally distinguished themselves in the battle, but it is clear that the King honours Macbeth above Banquo. Certainly, Macbeth appears to be the more dominating personage. And Banquo, who is praised so sincerely by the King for valour in battle, must have served to increase Macbeth's renown by being placed beside him. Banquo sets off Macbeth also by contrast and difference.

On the wild heath, Macbeth is first greeted by the witches and promised future greatness. Then, of course, Banquo gets interested, and demands of the witches whether they have anything to promise him. It ought to be noted that Banquo addresses the witches in a light-hearted and half-credulous manner as contrasted with Macbeth's seriousness. The effect of the prophecies upon both most significantly brings out the difference in their character. Macbeth is rapt in thought when he hears the prophecy of his future greatness, and attracts Banquo's notice and even his remark of caution. As a matter of fact, Banquo warns Macbeth that he should not in any case trust these witches, for their prophecies may be fulfilled in minor details, and then will be the means of tempting him to crime to the damnation of his soul. This warning goes unheeded. The difference between the two is further shown by the fact that Macbeth broods over these prophecies, and takes the opportunity to acquaint his wife with the fulfilment of part of the prophecies, while Banquo dismisses the prophecies made by the witches about himself, from his mind, however they may recur to him later. It cannot certainly be denied that the prophecies had partly an unsetting effect upon Banquo's mind. Banquo himself confesses :

> "A heavy summons lies like lead upon me,
> And yet I would not sleep : merciful powers !
> Restrain in me the cursed thoughts that nature
> Gives way to in repose."

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Again, after Macbeth has secured the throne and when Banquo seems to be aware by what means he has done it, he thinks of these prophecies :

> "If there come truth from them—
> As upon thee, Macbeth, their speeches, shine—
> Why, by the verities on thee made good,
> May they not be my oracles as well,
> And set me up in hope ?"

The fact is that Banquo does not give way to cursed thoughts that go deep into his mind, whenever he has no conscious control of his thought-process. Banquo, however, is a serious rival of Macbeth, and Macbeth has no peace of mind until he gets rid of him. But dead Banquo gives Macbeth no peace. His ghost returns to plague his spite. But as contrasted with Macbeth, Banquo keeps his loyalty to the king and his virtue and innocence untainted.

His Honesty—Banquo, though he is greeted by the witches as the father of a line of kings, does not take them seriously. Having no predisposition to crime like Macbeth, he would have nothing to do with the witches. He neither begs favour from them, nor dreads their malice. He frankly points out to Macbeth the danger of trusting them when he notices how the latter is impressed. He does not let the prophecies of the witches about himself infect his mind, or poison the peace of his soul. But after all Banquo is human ; as he confesses to cursed thoughts that take possession of his mind in sleep. Being honest and faithful, he restrains these thoughts ; there was a moment when Macbeth evidently tries to seduce Banquo from his honesty. Macbeth invites him to consultation over the prophecies of the witches, and Banquo seems to scent the game, and insists that whatever the result of the conference, it must leave to him a 'franchis'd bosom' and a 'clear conscience.'

His Caution—Brave by nature, and a soldier by profession, Banquo is also a shrewd man of the world. He adroitly praises the treasonable suggestions of Macbeth and without committing himself to any dishonourable conduct, avoids giving open offence to him. He is aware how Macbeth has secured the throne, but he keeps Macbeth in good humour, and does his best to avert suspicion by professing allegiance in emphatic language ;

> "Let your highness
> Command upon me ; to the which my duties
> Are with a most indissoluble tie
> For ever knit."

Macbeth himself is conscious of Banquo's caution as well as bravery.

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He pays a well-deserved tributed to Banquo :

".. ...' tis much he dares :
and, to that dauntless temper of his mind,
He hath a wisdom that doth guid his valour
To act in safety."

This caution makes Banquo so much dreaded by Macbeth.

His Modesty—Modesty marks Banquo's character. He had almost an equal share with Macbeth in winning the battle of Fife ; Macbeth gets a new title and extravagant praise from the king' but Banquo is simply contented with an embrace from his sovereign. Banquo's modest and sincere reply to the king's act of courtesy, is characteristic of him :

"There if I grow,
The ha rvest is your own."

Macbeth and Banquo Compared

1. The words of the witches profoundly influence Macbeth. He is rapt in thought for a while. He seems to be visibly startled, forgets his surroundings, and behaves in an unaccountable manner. The seeds of guilt were already in his mind. This new temptation comes as shock to his imaginative nature. He seems to be taken partly by surprise by the revelation of his guilty thought in the prophecy of the witches, but he welcomes it and seems to revel in it.

Banquo, on the other hand, is incredulous about what the witches say. The witches simply awaken his curiosity as being partly human and partly non-human, but their words have little effect upon his mind. He is properly on his guard against being betrayed by the witches.

2. Macbeth is willing to sin, but he is deterred by his terrors, summoned by his imagination. There is already evil in his heart, and a secret pact is almost unconsciously made between the evil in his heart and the evil outside. This explains why the witches have immediately a strong hold upon his mind. Then comes his wife co-operating with the witches.

Banquo keeps his soul untainted with evil. He knows that the witches are agents of evil, and he will have nothing to do with them. Macbeth yields too readily to the temptation, but Banquo simply sweeps it aside.

3. Macbeth is subject to gusts of passion and imagination. His imagination seems to play tricks upon him, and calls up fantastic terrors that press upon his soul. He can only act impulsively and he bungles when he has to think out a course of action.

Banquo is not troubled by the imagination. He is more practical and business-like than Macbeth. After the discovery of the murder, everything seems to be in confusion, but Banquo keeps

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his nerve and the only practical suggestion comes from Banquo, who propose that they should all dress and return to hold and investigation nto the circumstances of the murder.

Macduff

Maacduff is a bluff, outspoken soldier, a typically patriotic Scot. Gervinus writes of him : "He is described in the play as noble, wise, clear-sighted, as choosing well his opportunity. Thus noble, blameless and elemental we should think Macduff entirely wanting, in that goad of sharp ambition necessary to make him a victorious opponent of Macbeth and to enable him to stand his ground against that mighty and infuriated man. The poet, therefore, by the horrible extermination of his family, divests him of the milk of human kindness, and makes him by this means at once fitted to be conqueror of Macbeth."

His Patriotism—Macduff suspects Macbeth from the very beginning. "Wherefore did you so ?"—with which he challenges Macbeth when the latter confesses to having murdered two chamberlains, shows how spirited he is. He is the first to second Banquo's proposal of unearthing the assassins of Duncan.

He refuses to attend Macbeth's coronation ceremony ; he has a premonition "that old robes might fit easier than new." His loyalty to Duncan prevents him from offering his allegiance to the usurper ; his patriotism warns him that he would be betraying his country if he did so. He openly takes up an attitude of protest and defiance, whatever the consequences may be. He flatly refuses to attend the banquet to which Macbeth invites him. As a defender of his country's interests against Macbeth's tyranny, he is not prepared to dissemble. When Banquo is murdered, Macduff feels that the time has come for practical measures to rid Scotland of Macbeth's tyranny. Leaving wife, children and home at the mercy of the tyrant, and even declining in his patriotic zeal to inform his wife of his plan, he starts for England—not so much to avoid the hostility of Macbeth as to induce Malcolm to take up arms against the tyrant. During the course of his whole conversation with Malcolm, he paints the woes of his country most graphically. His first question to Ross is : Stands Scotland where it did ?" and it is only after Ross informs him of the cruel fate of his family that a personal motive is added to his patriotic quest. In the battle, he has only one aim in view—the slaying of Macbeth in order to avenge the murder of his wife and children, and to ensure that the time should be free.

His Reticence. Macduff is a man of action, not of words. This partly explains why he left his family without giving any explanation. In the long dialogue with Malcolm, Macduff has necessarily much to say, because he has not only to represent the state of affairs in Scotland in order to induce the obviously reluctant

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Prince to accept his proposals, but also to defend himself against allegations of treachery. In Act V, Scene iv, he brings the futile discussion on the prospects of victory to a close by suggesting that they should "put on industrious soldiership' and await the result of the battle. And when he meets Macbeth on the battlefield, he says, "I have no words, my voice is in my sword."

His Affection—Lady Macduff might question her husband's affection and the strength of his family-attachment. But when Ross brings him the news of the slaughter of his wife and children in his castle when he was not there to protect them, his grief, at first tongue-tied, breaks forth in passionate words of self-accusation and revenge upon the murderer. Nothing can be surer evidence of his deep affection for her wife and children. His broken sentences, his repetition of questions already answered, his imprecations on himself for having been away from home, his desire to feel it like a man—all this reveals tenderness of affection in a veteran soldier. However, he soon recovers his balance, and with a prayer to heaven to rest the souls of his dear ones, he resolves to avenge their deaths with his own hands.

Duncan

The nobility of Duncan as a king is borne witness to by Macbeth himself :

"Besides' this Duncan
Hath borne his faculties so meek hath been
So clear in his great office, that his virtues
Will plead like angles, trumpet-tongu'd, against
The deep damnation of his taking-off"

The historical Duncan was a weak and incompetent ruler but Shakespeare paints him as worthy of all veneration and loyalty, for his subjects. In any case he bears an honourable and virtuous character. He is gracious in his dealings with his subjects, and is, loved by them. He is of an amiable temperament, and is quick to acknowledge and reward services to the state. He is trustful and unsuspecting. He has been already betrayed by one in whom he placed an absolute trust ; yet he does not hesitate to place his life, of his own accord, in the hands of another favourite. It has to be said that he was a man born out of his proper age into a century of intrigue and violence. In fact he is too peaceful a man to govern a country in which turbulence is so rife. His is a nature too refined to adopt those strong measures which are needed to keep to check the unruly passions and ambitions of his nobles. Instead of being, as every king ought to be, a student of human character, he is a lover of nature and natural beauties. He has not the art to find the mind's construction in the face. He believes that the conferring of honours on all who deserve them is but a fitting pendant to the nomination of Malcolm as heir-apparent ; he cannot even

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guess that there are other aspirants to the throne. He fails to penetrate the mask of Lady Macbeth's treachery. He scents nothing wrong in Macbeth's absence from the supper-table. He even enjoys himself heartily, and distributes presents all round. It is this failure to understand the world, this hermit-like saintliness of him, which costs him his life.

Malcolm

Malcolm is a cool, sagacious, far-seeing man, richly dowered with all the qualities that make for leadership. He seems to be a contrast to his father Duncan ; he is wary and cautious, while Duncan is trustful and unsuspecting. Of course, he has learned the lesson of cautiousness in the school of experience. He has to run away and seek safety in England immedialely after the murder of his father, and again he has to repel the seductions of Macbeth, and to keep himself out of the traps that Macbeth lays for him. He rightly says that modest wisdom plucks him from overcredulous haste. Such has been his experience that he begins to mistrust everybody. He blackens his own character outrageously in order to test Macduff's honesty. Constant watchfulness is his leading characteristic. There is certainly no reason to suspect the truth of what he says about himself when he retracts his self-accusation. He is a slave neither of lust nor of avarice. He will not act the traitor, even when he is dealing with the Devil, and he will rather risk his life than utter a lie. He is very deeply greatful to the English King for the way in which the latter had received him and offered to help him. But Malcolm does not seem to be gifted with finer sensibilities. He can hardly appreciate Macduff's griefs, he does not seem to have delicacy enough to respect this grief. His talk of a great revenge at the moment seem to be ill-timed. Nor is Malcolm free from a rash optimism. When marching on Dunsinane, he looks forward to triumph and rejoicing and for this he is promptly, though gently rebuked, by the veteran warriors, Siward and Macduff. Lastly when he is acclaimed King of Scotland by the assembled nobles, he is in such an intemperate hurry 'to make himself' even with his supporters that one is led to suspect that he does not credit those supporters with any motive other than the seeking of rewards.

Ross

Ross takes no very prominent part in the action of the drama, but he is present at every important scene. He is not a strong personality that might influence the conduct of others ; yet he is a necessary link in the chain of events that constitute the drama. One critic holds that Ross is the root of all villainy in the plays. Such a view cannot be true. Far from being a despicable coward and a double traitor, Ross typifies the average nobleman-courtier of his day, without any outstanding moral virtues, without

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initiative or strength of character, but at the same time without any special vices or selfish designs. He enjoys the confidence of all the three Kings, Duncan, Macbeth and Malcolm. He is little taken aback, by the "thriftless ambition" which is alleged to have led Malcolm and Donalbain to procure their father's death ; but he is not so thoughtful, or interested in public affairs as to suspect Macbeth, or to refuse to attend his coronation ceremony. He and Lennox fill up what would be gaps in the dialogue ; and between them they keep the audience informed of what others, besides the principal characters, think. Ross acts as a messenger twice—in bringing news of the victory at Fife to Duncan and in informing Malcolm that Scotland was ripe for a revolution. It falls to him, not only to inform Macduff of the fate of Lady Macduff and her children, but also to announce to old Siward the recovery of his son's dead body.

Lady Macduff

Lady Macduff is a typical domestic woman, who is little concerned with public affairs, and cares less for the issues of the state. Her thoughts range within a narrow circle—husband, children, and the family-property. Her husband has told her nothing of the troubles in the State, of Macbeth's acts of murder, tyranny and oppression. So when her husband runs away to England without giving her any previous hint, she cannot conceive that it has got anything to do with policy. She cannot but accuse him of desertion. Her commonsense tells her that when life and property are not safe in Scotland, Macduff's fight must be a foolish step. Nor can she understand why, if her husband is not guilty of treachery, he should run away, and risk being considered a traitor.

When she learns of her husband's flight, she has forebodings of danger but like a sensible woman, she carries on a playful talk with her little son, and it seems to mask her forebodings. Soon this witty and forcedly merry conversation is interrupted by the arrival of a messenger who warns Lady Macduff of her immediate danger. Having little experience of the world, and unable to decide what to do in face of immediate peril, she has to meet the murderers. The murderers show no pity to her young son. Both mother and son fall victims to Macbeth's wanton cruelty.

Lady Macbeth and Lady Macduff Contrasted

"A murderous woman and a murdered woman—in this, Lady Macbeth and Lady Macduff are placed by their fates at opposite poles ; and in their characters also they stand poles, apart—the one a partner in the madness of ambition, the other, a wife in the strength of love ; the one, deep in the confidence of her husband in the compassing of crime, the other, sharing with hers the sweet happiness of hearth and home ; the one, childless and with a

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mother's love lying barren within her, the other, surrounded by little ones on whom she could pour forth the wealth of a mother's love. It is this happy home, which his own married life has never known, that Macbeth bracks into, and this happy family whose lives he swoops down upon. To such a wife and mother, her husband's flight, without a word of farewell, has and can have but one meaning—"he loves us not, for if he did, he would not leave us thus." She had heard that the King had marked down her husband as a traitor : she knows nothing what he has done or said, that could prove him to be one ; with playful irony she tells the child that his father was a traitor, for with him she could not be serious ; but within herself she bitterly feels that an innocent man should have behaved like a traitor, should have run away, when he should have stood firm on his innocence and proved it ; this is why with a smile that conceals this bitterness, she gives that reply to her little son's question. The queen has many a round to serve her with fear—none with love ; the lady of Castle, Fife is loved by many who know her goodness, and by strangers who have heard of it ; and it is one of these that comes to warn her, at the risk of his own life. Was there anyone in Scotland who would have warned the queen, if she needed warning ?

—*H. M. Percival.*

CRITICAL OPINIONS

(1) "I regard *Macbeth*, on the whole, as the greatest treasure of our dramatic literature. We may look as Britons at Greek sculpture and at Italian paintings, with a humble consciousness that our native art has never reached their perfection ; but in the Drama we can confront Aeschylus himself with Shakespeare ; and of all modern theatres, *ours* alone can compete with the Greek in the unborrowed nativeness and sublimity of its superstition. In the grandeur of tragedy *Macbeth* has no parallel, till we go back to the *Prometheus and the Furies* of the Attic stage. I could even produce, if it were not disgracing too far from my subject innumerable instances of striking similarity between the metaphorical mintage of Shakespeare's and Aeschylus's style—a similarity, both in beauty and in the fault of excess, that unless the contrary had been proved, would lead me to suspect our great dramatist to have been a studious Greek scholar. But their resemblance arose from the consanguinity of nature. In one respect, the tragedy of *Macbeth* always reminds me of Aeschylus's poetry. It has scenes on conception absolutely too bold for representation. What stage could do justice to Aeschylus, when the Titan Prometheus makes his appeal to the elements, and when the hammer is heard in the Scythian Desert that revets his chains ? Of when the Ghost of Clytemnestra rushes into Apollo's temple, and rouses the sleeping Furies ? I wish to imagine these scenes, I should be sorry to see the acting

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of them attempted. In like manner, there are parts of *Macbeth* which I delight to read much more than to see in the theatre..... .....Nevertheless, I feel no inconsistency in reverting from these remarks to my first assertion, that all in all, *Macbeth* is our greatest possession in dramatic poetry." —*Campbell.*

(2) "As regards wealth of thought, *Macbeth* ranks far below *Hamlet* : it lacks the wide, free, historic perfection which in *Julius Caesar* raises us above the horror of his tragic fall. It cannot be compared with *Othello* for completeness, depth of plot, or full, rich illustration of character. But, in our opinion it excels all that Shakespeare, or any other poet, has created, in the simple force of the harmonious, majestic current of its action, in the transparency of its plan, in the nervous power and bold sweep of its language, and in its prodigal wealth of poetical colouring."

—*Kreyssings.*

(3) "Like most Shakespearean tragedy, *Macbeth* is the tragedy of a man betrayed by an obsession. Caesar is betrayed by an obsession of the desire of glory, Antonio by passion, Tranquin by lust. Wolsely by worldly greed, Coriolanus and Timon by their nobleness, Angelo by his righteousness, and Hamlet by his wisdom. All fail through having some hunger or quality in excess. Macbeth fails because he interprets with his worldly mind things spiritually suggested to him. God sends on many men 'strong delusion, that they shall believe a lie.' Othello is one such. Many things betray man. One strong means of delusion is the half-truth, half-wise, half-spiritual thing, so much harder to kill than the lie direct. Sentimental treacherous things, like women who betray by arousing pity, are the dangerous things because their attack is made in the guise of great things. Tears lack like grief ; sentiment looks like love : love feels nobility : spiritualism seems like revelation.

Among these things few are stronger than the words spoken in unworldly states, in trance, in ecstacy, by oracles and diviners, by sooth-sayers, by the wholly excited people who are also half-sane, by whoever obtains a half knowledge of the spirit, by destruction of intellectual process.

To win us to our harm,
The instruments of darkness tell us truths,
Win us with honest trifles, to betray
In deepest consequences.

Coming weary and excited from battle, on a day so strange that it adds to the strangeness of his mood, Macbeth bears, the hags hail him with prophecy. The promise rankles in him. The seed scattered in us by the beings, outside life comes to good or evil according to the sun in us. Macbeth looking at the letter of the prophecy, thinks only of the letter of its fulfilment till it becomes an obsession with him. Partial fulfilment of the prophecy

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convinces him that all will be fulfilled. The belief that the veil over the future has been lifted for him, gives him the recklessness of one bound in the knots of Fate. So, often, the thought that the soul is in a trap, playing out something planned of old, makes man take the frantic way, when the smallest belief in life would lead to peace. This thought passes through his mind. Then fear that it is all a contriving of the devils makes him put it manfully from his mind. The talk about the Cawdor whose place he holds is a thrust to him. The Cawdor was a traitor who has been put to death for treachery. The King had an 'absolute trust' in him ; but there is no judging by appearances. This glimpse of the ugliness of treachery makes Macbeth in an instant free of all temptations to it. Then a word stabs him again to the knowledge that if he takes no step, the King's young son will be King after Duncan. Why should the boy rule ? From this point he goes forward, full of all the devils of indecision, but inclining towards righteousness, till his wife girding and railing at him with definite aim while all his powers are in mutiny, drives him to the act of murder.

The story of the double treachery of the killing of a King who is also a guest, is so written that we do not feel horror so much as an unbearable pity for Macbeth's mind.

The horror is felt later, when it seemed plain that the treachery does not end with that old man on the bed, but proceeds in a spreading growth of murder till the man who fought so knightly at Fife is the haunted awful figure who ghastly, kills men, women and little children, till Scotland is like a grave. At the end the 'worthy gentle man,' 'noble Macbeth,' having fallen from depth to depth of degradation, is old hag-haunted, sick at heart, and weary. He has no friends. He knows himself silently cursed by everyone in his kingdom. His queen is haunted. There is a curse upon the pair of them. The birds of murder have come to roost. All that supports him is his trust in his reading of the words of the hogs. He knows himself secure :

> 'And you all know security
> Is mortal's chiefest enemy.'

He has suppled full with horrors, his bloody base mind is all a blur with gore. But he is resolute in evil still. At the end he sees too late that he has been tricked by—

> '.. the equivocation of the fiend,
> That lies like truth.'

His queen has killed herself. All the welter of murder has been useless. All that he has done is to damn his soul through the centuries during which the line of Banquo will regin. He dies with a courage that is half fury against the fate that has tricked him."

—*Masefield.*

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(4) "*Macbeth* is a tragedy of Fate. In all the tragedies the idea of a "divinity that shapes our ends, rough-hew them how he will" is present ; it may be simply the comet that foretells the death of princes ; it may be the darker feeling that,

> 'As flies to wanton boys, are we to the gods,
> They kill us for their sport.'

But until the irrecoverable end, even in *Lear* some way of escape seems possible. *Macbeth* is throughout the playing of some evil power that uses the witches as his ministers.

When Macbeth first enters with Banquo, he has been brooding on treason, and the prophecy that he shall be Thane of Glamis and King hereafter comes pat on his thoughts. The first prophecy is fulfilled at once ; how will the second be fulfilled ? Macbeth says :—

> "Why do I yield to that suggestion
> Whose horrid image doth unfix my hair,
> And makes my seated heart knock at my ribs,
> Against the use of nature ?"

But Macbeth is not the man for such a deed of treachery ; his nature, as his wife knows, is 'too full of milk of human kindness to catch the nearest way.' The ambition of any other man, wedded to Lady Macbeth's cruelty, might have achieved the prize, but she forgets Macbeth's imagination. Macbeth is so swayed by his imagination that he is the shadow, his imagination the reality. Had he not tired to thwart it, all might have been well : even when the time for the murder is come, it shows him the meaning and the horror of the deed, and he would have listened, but for his wife who uses the one argument irresistible to a soldier :

> 'Art thou afraid
> To be the same in thine own act and valour
> As thou art desired ?'

When he descends from Duncan's chamber, aimlessly carrying the bloody daggers, the realisation of what has been done completely overcomes him, and he walks, as if in a trance. The contrast here between Lady Macbeth, firm, remorseless, and practical and Macbeth, living in the world of fantasy tortured by the voice that cries 'Sleep no more ; Macbeth hath murdered sleep,' is incomparable. She seems so strong, concerned only with facts and things ; she has no fancies, she dares not. And later when the loud knocking suddenly breaks upon this sublimation of horror, Macbeth is too dazed to move until she takes him roughly by the arm with the impatient cry :

> 'A little water clear us of this deed ;
> How easy is it then.'

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Three ideas stand out in this scene : blood, water, darkness. They recur at the end of the play when Lady Macbeth's strength has failed and she can no longer deny her imagination.

'Hell is murky'.....'Yet who would have thought the old man to have so much blood in him'.....'What ! will these hands ne'er been clean'... ... . 'Here's the smell of the blood still : all the perfumes of Arabia will not sweeten this little hand.'

Fate having tempted Macbeth to murder, the prophecy is fulfilled, and Macbeth's imagination, like some genie, towers over him, tormenting him unceasingly.....

"Having begun with murder, Macbeth cannot stop, and his degeneration is swift and terrible ; he becomes filled with blood lust ; and, in his madness, he even challenges Fate itself into the lists to fight to the finish. Banquo is murdered, and, inevitably, Fleance escapes. Natural allies desert Macbeth, and now he has only the witches to support him : they have cheated him once ; they cheat him again with three more prophecies that lie like truth. As the avengers gather, the full horror of the tragedy of *Macbeth* is summed up in the sleep-walking scene through the lips of the once hard, pitiless woman who had forced him to destroy himself. One by one the prophecies fail, and Macbeth dies fighting. Macbeth like Faustus in the old story called up the spirit of Darkness ; it gave him his desire and then dashed him to pieces."

—*Harrison.*

(5) "*Macbeth* is not only a tragedy of crime, but of crime which has no motive but vulgar ambition, and is in all its circumstances mean. To have clothed these dastardly criminals with surpassing grandeur is one of Shakespeare's most amazing feats. Macbeth, when we first meet him is, like Othello, a great soldier and conqueror, gratefully honoured by his country. The thought of usurping the throne of the meek Duncan has certainly visited him ; but these criminal impulses are frustrated by an overpowering imagination, which compels him to see his acts with all circumstances and consequences—pity 'like a new-born babe, striding the blast' and the poison'd chalice' returning to his own lips.

The witches who hail King on the heath at Forres do not originate the thought, but they waken it into eager and tormenting urgency. He, no more than Hamlet, 'sweeps' to his act of blood ; but his life becomes henceforth a terrible dream. The horror of the deed appeals him before he does it (Act I, Scene i) unnerves him in the doing (Act II, Scene ii), and tortures him when down (Act III, scene ii). The tragic climax is reached at the close of the second Act. With its successive murders, Macbeth's nerves grows stiffer and the Nemesis of tormenting vision more fitful : but to the last he has glimpses, like the wounderful speech 'She should

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have died hereafter' (Act V, Scene iv), which touch the heart of mortal-beings. Another kind of greatness flashes out in his last words of all, when the witches' charms have failed one after another, and he stands at bay against hopeless odds :

'Though Birnam wood be come to Dunsinane,
And thou opposed, being of no woman born,
Yet I will try the last.'

Lady Macbeth is at the outset yet muse imposing. Her nature is simple, as it is more intense ; yet the terrific will-power, which carries her through the dreadful deed unshrinking, where he falters, is not the robustiousness of a virago, but the nervous exaltation of a high strung, sensitive woman like that which made her capable, had she sworn to do it, of braining the child at her breast. She has no Macbeth's imagination : if her hand shrinks for a moment, it is from no vision of pity ridding the blast, but because Duncan resembled her father as he slept When the supreme crisis is over, and the crown is their own, success tastes as bitter in mouth as in his :—

'Nought's had, all's spent
Where our desire is got without contempt.' (Act III, Scene ii).

She has not his "restless ecstasy" but her finer nerve gives way where he gathers his strength, and her fever-stricken brain is at length visited by visions like those which had appalled him. "All the perfume of Araby will not sweeten this little hand."

—*Herford*

(6) "This drama shows us the gathering, the discharge, and the dispelling of a domestic and political storm, which takes its peculiar view from the individual character of the hero. It is not in the spirit of mischief that animates the 'weird sisters', nor in the passionate and strong-willed ambition of Lady Macbeth, that we find the main spring of this tragedy, but in the disproportioned though poetically tempered soul of Macbeth himself. A character like this, of extreme selfishness, with a most irritable fancy, must produce, even in ordinary circumstances, an excess of morbid apprehensiveness ; which however, as we see in him is not inconsistent with the greatest physical courage, but generates of necessity the most entire moral cowardice. When, therefore, a man like this, ill enough qualified even for the honest and straightforward transactions of life, has brought himself to snatch at an ambitious object by the commission of one great sanguinary crime, the new and false position in which he finds himself by his very success, will but startle and exasperate him to escape, as Macbeth says, from 'horrible imaginings,' by the perpetration of greater and greater actual horrors, till inevitable destruction comes upon as amidst universal execration. Such, briefly, are the story and the

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moral of *Macbeth*. The passionate ambition and indomitable will of his lady, though agents indispensable, to urge such man to the one decisive act which is to compromise him in his own opinion and that of the world, are by no means primary springs of the dramatic action. Nor do the 'weird sisters' themselves do more than aid collaterally in impelling a man, the inherent evil of whose nature and purpose has predisposed him to take their equivocal suggestions in the moral mischievous sense. And finally, the very thunder-cloud which, from the beginning almost to the ending, wraps this fearful tragedy in physical darkness and lurid glare, does not reflect and harmonize with the moral blackness of the piece.....

The very starting-point for an inquiry into the real, inherent, and habitual nature of Macbeth, independent of those particular circumstances which form the action of the play, lies manifestly, though the critics have commonly overlooked it, in the question, with whom does the scheme of usurping the Scottish crown by the murder of Duncan actually originate? We sometimes find Lady Macbeth talked of as if she were the first contriver of the plot and suggester of the assassination ; but this notion is refuted, not only by implication, in the whole tenor of the piece, but most explicitly in Act I, Scene vii, 48-52. Most commonly, however, the witches (as we find the 'weird sisters' pertinaciously miscalled by all sorts of players and of critics) have borne the imputation of being the first to put this piece of mischief in the hero's mind. Yet the prophetic words in which the attainment of royalty is promised to him contain not the remotest hint as to the means by which he is to arrive at it. They are simply 'All hail Macbeth ! that shall be King hereafter'—an announcement which, it is plain, should have rather inclined a man who was not already harbouring a scheme of guilty ambition to await quietly the course of events. According to Macbeth's own admission, the words of the 'weird sisters' on this occasion convey anything rather than an incitement to murder to the mind of a man meditating it already. This supernatural soliciting is only made such to the mind of Macbeth by the fact that he is already occupied with a purpose of assassination."

—*Fletcher.*

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DRAMATIS PERSONAE

Duncan, King of Scotland.

Malcolm, *Donalbain* } His Sons.

Macbeth, *Banquo* } Generals of the King's Army.

Macduff, *Lennox*, *Ross*, *Menteith*, *Angus*, *Caithness* } Noblemen of Scotland.

Fleance, Son to Banquo.

Siward, Earl of Northumberland, General of the English Forces.

Young Siward, his Son.

Seyton, an Officer attending on Macbeth.

Boy, son to Macduff.

An English Doctor.

A Scotch Doctor.

A Sergeant.

A Porter.

An Old Man.

Lady Macbeth.

Lady Macduff.

Gentlewoman attending on Lady Macbeth.

Hecate.

Three Witches.

Lords, Gentlemen, Officers, Soldiers, Murderers, Attendants and Messengers.

The Ghost of Banquo and other Apparitions,

Scene: : *Scotland : England.*

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MACBETH

ACT I

Scene I. A Desert Place.

Thunder and Lightning. Enter three Witches.

First Witch. When shall we three meet again,
In thunder, lightning or in rain ?

Second Witch. When the hurlyburly's done,
When the battle's lost and won.

Third Witch. That will be ere the set of sun,

First Witch. Where the place ?

Second Witch. Upon the heath.

Third Witch. There to meet with Macbeth.

First Witch. I come, Graymalkin !

Second Witch. Paddock calls.

Third Witch. Anon.

All. Fair is foul, and foul is fair :
Hover through the fog and filthy air. [*Exeunt.*

Scene II. A Camp near Forres.

Alarum within. Enter Duncan, Malcolm, Donalbain,

Lennox. *With* Attendants, *meeting a bleeding* Sergeant.

Dun. What bloody man is that ? He can report,
As seemeth by his plight, of the revolt
the newest state.

Mal. This is the sergeant
Who like a good and hardy soldier, fought
'Gainst my captivity. Hail, brave friend !
Say to the king the knowledge of the broil
As thou didst leave it.

Ser. Doubtful it stood ;
As two spent swimmers, that do cling together
And choke their art. The merciless Macdonwald,

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MACBETH—PARAPHRASE

ACT I

Scene I. A Desert Place.

Thunder and lightning. Enter three Witches.

First Witch. at what time of the day are we three going to meet again ? Will it not be when nature is seriously disturbed by thunder, lightning, and rain ?

Second Witch. We shall meet again when the tumult of battle is over, and its result is known—victory for one party and defeat for other.

Third Witch. The battle will be decided before the sun sets.

First Witch. At what place we are going to meet ?

Second Witch. Let it be the wild moorland.

Third Witch. There we are going to meet Macbeth, as he returns from the battlefield.

First Witch. I am coming. Graymalkin (in answer to the cry of an attending spirit in the shape of a cat).

Second Witch. My attending spirit, a toad is calling me.

Third Witch. I am coming immediately.

All. All that is good is evil to us and all that is evil is good to us—we delight in topsyturvydom. Let us fly through the fogged and unwholesome air. *[Exeunt.*

Scene II. A Camp near Forres.

Alarum within. Enter Duncan, Malcolm, Donalabain, Lennox, *with* Attendants, *meeting a bleeding* Sergeant.

Dun. Who is this man, stained with blood ? It appears from his condition that he can give us the latest news of the rebellion.

Mal. He is the sergeant who, a good and stout soldier as he is, fought hard, and saved me from being taken prisoner. Welcome, brave friend ! Please tell the king all that you know of the battle at the time you left it.

Ser. The battle was—wavering. Like two swimmers, who are quite done out, and cling to each other for support, thus defeating their mutual skill in swimming the two armies are in deadly encounter, and have little scope for their skill or bravery. The hard-hearted Macdonwald

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Worthy to be a rebel, for to that
The multiplying villanies of nature
Do swarm upon him, from the western isles
Of kerns and gallowglasses is supplied ;
And fortune, on his damned quarrel smiling,
Show'd like a rebel's whore : but all's too weak ;
For brave Macbeth, well he deserves that name,
Disdaining Fortune, with his brandish'd steel,
Which smoked with bloody execution,
Like valour's minion carved out his passage
Till he faced the slave ;
Which ne'er shook hands, nor bade farewell to him,
Till he unseam'd him from the nave to the chaps,
And fix'd his head upon our battlements.

Dun. O valiant cousin ! worthy gentleman !
Ser. As whence the sun'gins his reflection
Shipwrecking storms and direful thunders break,
So from that spring whence comfort seem'd to come
Discomfort swells. Mark, king of Scotland, mark :
No sooner justice had with valour arm'd,
Compell'd these skipping kerns to trust their heels,
But the Norweyan lord surveying vantage,
With furbish'd arms and new supplies of men
Began a fresh assault.

Dun. Dismay'd not this
Our captains, Macbeth and Banquo ?

Ser. Yes ;
As sparrows eagles, or the hare the lion.
If I say sooth, I must report they were
As cannons overcharged with double cracks ; so they
Doubly redoubled strokes upon the foe :
Except they meant to bathe in reeking wounds,
Or memorize another Golgotha,
I cannot tell—
But I am faint, my gashes cry for help.

Dun. So well thy words become thee as thy wounds ;
They smack of honour both. Go get him surgeons.

[*Exit sergeant, attended.*

Enter Ross.

Who comes here ?

Mal. The worthy Thane of Ross.
Len. What a haste looks through his eyes ! So should he look.
That seems to speak things strange.

Ross. God save the king !
Dun. Whence camest thou, worthy thane ?

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is fit to be a rebel ; to that end nature has bestowed upon him vices that breed and multiply with growing years. He has been supplied with light armed infantry and heavy armed troops from the outer Hebrides. Fortune seemed to favour his wicked cause, and thus acted like the mistress of a rebel. But nothing can withstand Mecbeth. He is brave Macbeth. He well deserves that epithet. Waving his sword, which recked with blood that it had shed, he defied fortune, and like the darling of valour, he cut his way through the massed enemy, until he met the wretch (Macdonwald) face to face. He never wasted a minute either in shaking hands with, or bidding farewell to his enemy, but reapen him open from the naval to the jaws, and set up his head on our parapets as a sign and warning.

Dun. O gallant kinsman ! Most estimable gentleman !

Ser. As from the East where the sun begins to shine, storms that are disasterous to ships and dreadful thunders break, so from the very source whence our happiness seems to come, springs also our distress. May it please your Majesty to listen to what followed. No sooner had Macbeth, fighting in a just cause, and armed with courage, had put his light armed infantry to flight, than Sweno, king of Norway, who watched for his opportunity, renewed the battle, with a reinforcement, a body of men whose arms were shining brightly.

Dun. Did not this turn of events frighten our captains, Macbeth and Banquo ?

Ser. It frightened them no more than sparrows frighten eagles, or hares frighten lions. If I am to tell the truth, I must say that our captains assailed the enemy with redoubled zeal, and resembled cannons loaded with a double charge of gun-powder and exploding with double fury. I do not know whether they meant to spill so much blood that they might bathe in it, or whether they wanted to enact another scene of slaughter that would be as memorable as Golgotha of Biblical fame. But I am feeling too weak to speak any further. My wounds need to be attended to at once.

Dun. Your speeches are as worthy of you as your wounds ; they both breathe of honour. Go and have his wounds attended to by surgeons. [*Exit Sergeant, attended.*

Who is the man coming here ?

Enter Ross.

Mal. It is the noble Earl of Ross.

Len. In his eyes is an expression of impetuous hurry ! A man who brings strange news, should have such a look.

Ross. May God save the king !

Dun. Where are you coming from, noble lord ?

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Ross. From Fife, great king ;
Where the Norweyan banners flout the sky
And fan our people cold. Norway himself,
With terrible numbers,
Assisted by that most disloyal traitor,
The Thane of Cawdor, began a dismal conflict ;
Till that Bellona's bridegroom, lapp'd in proof,
Confronted him with self-comparisons,
Point against point rebellious, arm 'gainst arm,
Curbing his lavish spirit : and, to conclude,
The victory fell on us.

Dun. Great happiness !

Ross. That now
Sweno, the Norways' king, craves composition ;
Nor would we deign him burial of his men
Till he disbursed at Saint Colme's inch
Ten thousand dollars to our general use.

Dun. No more that Thane of Cawdor shall deceive
Our bosom interest. Go pronounce his present death,
And with his former title greet Macbeth.

Ross. I'll see it done.

Dun. What he hath lost noble Macbeth hath won.

[*Exeunt.*

Scene III. A Heath, near Forres.

Thunder. Enter the three Witches.

First Witch. Where hast thou been, sister ?

Second Witch. Killing swine.

Third Witch. Sister, where thou ?

First Witch. A sailor's wife had chestnuts in her lap,
and munch'd, and munch'd, and munch'd :—'Give me,'
quoth I ;
'Aroint thee, witch !' the rump-fed ronyon cries.
Her husband's to Aleppo gone, master o' the Tiger ;
But in a sieve I'll thither sail,
And like a rat without a tail,
I'll do, I'll do, and I'll do.

Second Witch. I'll give thee a wind.

First Witch. Thou 'rt kind.

Third Witch. And I another.

First Witch. I myself have all the other ;
And the very ports they blow,
All the quarters that they know
I' the shipman's card.
I will drain him dry as hay :

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Ross. I am coming from Fife, Your Majesty, where the banner of the Norwegian king seems to defy the sky, and chill the hearts of our people with terror. The king of Norway himself, supplied with a large body of men, assisted as he is by the thane of Cawdor, who has been so disloyal to you, renewed the combat. And when Macbeth, who fought as he were the bridegroom-elect of the Goddess of War, clad in armour of proof, met Sweno in a hand to hand combat and they seem to be will matched, but finally we were blessed with victory.

Dun. It is a happy news indeed !

Ross. And the result is that after his defeat the king of Norway sues for terms of peace. We did not allow him to bury his dead soldiers, till he had, at the island of Inchcolm, paid ten thousand dollars to be distributed among our men.

Dun. No more shall that false Earl of Cawdor enjoy my intimate confidence that he may betray me. Go, and pronounce the sentence of death upon him at once, and with the title which he enjoyed greet Macbeth.

Ross. I shall take steps to have Your Majesty's orders carried out.

Dun. Noble Macbeth shall gain, what Cawdor has lost.

[*Exeunt.*

Scene III. A heath, near Forres.

Thunder. Enter the three Witches.

First Witch. Where have you been, sister, since we met last ?

Second Witch I have been engaged in killing pigs.

Third Witch. Where have you been, sister ?

First Witch. I met a sailor's wife who had a heap of chestnuts on her lap. As she had no teeth, she kept on chewing them noisily with her gums. I asked her for some ; but the half-starved wretched woman cried, "Get away, you witch !" The husband of that woman, a captain of the vessel, *Tiger*, has gone on a voyage to Aleppo. I shall follow him there by sailing in a sieve, and like a tailless rat, I will get into his ship, and do the mischief.

Second Witch. I will help you with a wind.

First Witch. It is very kind of you to do so.

Third Witch. And I will also give you another wind.

First Witch. I myself have all the other winds at my service ; and have control over the very ports on which these winds blow and all the directions that are marked in the compass of the sailors. By my witchcraft, I shall drain away all his blood, till he is as dry as hay.

Predaman Krishen Dhar
M.A. (Pol. Sc. Eco. Eng. Hist.) B.Ed.
Motivar Lainawari
SRINAGAR-190003
KASHMIR

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Sleep shall neither night nor day
Hang upon his pent-house lid ; Sloping eyelids
He shall live a man forbid. under curse
Weary se'nnights, nine times nine,
Shall he dwindle, peak and pine :
Though his bark cannot be lost,
Yet it shall be tempest-tost. assailed with heavy tempest
Look what I have.

Second Witch. Show me, show me.

First Witch. Here I have a pilot's thumb,
Wreck'd as homeward he did come, [*Drum within.*

Third Witch. A drum ! a drum !
Macbeth doth come. drum calls women

All. The weird sisters, and in hand,
Posters of the sea and land, magical powers we sweep over land & sea.
Thus do go about, about : We hand in hand in circle
Thrice to thine, and thrice to mine,
And thrice again. to make up nine.
Peace ! the charm's wound up. magical spell ready to work

Enter Macbeth *and* Banquo.

never experienced such weather between gloom & sunshine

Macb. So foul and fair a day I have not seen.

Ban. How far is't call'd to Forres ? What are these,
So wither'd and so wild in their attire,
That look not like th' inhabitants o' the earth,
And yet are on't ? Live you ? or are you aught living creatures
That man may question ? You seem to understand me,
By each at once her choppy finger laying Gestical
Upon her skinny lips : you should be women,
And yet your beards forbid me to interpret
That you are so.

Macb. Speak, if you can : what are you ? Earl of Glamis

First Witch. All hail, Macbeth ! hail to thee, thane of Glamis !

Second Witch. All hail, Macbeth ! hail to thee, Thane of Cawdor !

Third Witch. All hail, Macbeth ! that shalt be king hereafter !

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He shall have no sleep either by night or at day ; his sloping eyelids shall never close in sleep. He shall live as a man under a curse. For a dreary period of no less than eighty-one weeks, he will continue to waste away and shrivel up by degrees. Though his vessel will not be lost, yet it shall be assailed with a heavy tempest. Look at what I have got here in my head.

Second Witch. Please let me see it.

First Witch. Here I have the thumb of a pilot. He was shipwrecked when he was returning home.

[*Drum within.*

Third Witch. I hear the sound of a drum. That means that Macbeth is coming.

All. We are the three sisters who know the fates of men. By virtue of our magical powers we sweep over land and sea. Now hand in hand, we dance in a circle. We go round thrice in each direction, until we make up the number of nine. Let us stop. Our magic spell is ready to work.

Enter Macbeth *and* Banquo.

Macb. I have never experienced such weather ; alternating between gloom and sunshine.

Ban. How far is this place said to be from Forres ? What sort of creatures are these ? They are so haggard, and they are so fantastically clad ; they do not seem to be earthly creatures, and yet they inhabit the earth. Are you living creatures ? Are you any kind of creatures to whom a man may put questions ? By your gestures, you seem to understand my meaning, as each lays her cracked finger upon her withered lips. I should suppose you to be women, yet you have beards, which refute my impression of your being women.

Macb. Speak, if you can speak at all. What kind of creatures are you ?

First Witch. Welcome, Macbeth ? Welcome, you who are Earl of Glamis ?

Second Witch. Welcome, Macbeth ? Welcome, you who are Earl of Cawdor ?

Third Witch. Welcome, Macbeth ? Welcome, you who are destined to be king ?

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Ban. Good sir, why do you start, and seem to fear
Things that do sound so fair ? I, the name of truth,
Are ye fantastical, or that indeed
Which outwardly ye show ? My noble partner
You greet with present grace and great prediction
Of noble having and of royal hope,
That he seems rapt withal : to me you speak not.
If you can look into the seeds of time,
And say which grain will grow and which will not,
Speak then to me, who neither beg nor fear
Your favours nor your hate.

First Witch. Hail !

Second Witch. Hail !

Third Witch. Hail !

First Witch. Lesser than Macbeth, and greater.

Second Witch. Not so happy, yet much happier.

Third Witch. Thou shalt get kings, though thou be none : so all hail Macbeth and Banquo !

First Witch. Banquo and Macbeth, all hail !

Macb. Stay, you imperfect speakers, tell me more :
By Sinel's death I know I am Thane of Glamis ;
But how of Cawdor ? the Thane of Cawdor lives,
A prosperous gentleman ; and to be king
Stands not within the prospect of belief
No more than to be Cawdor. Say from whence
You owe this strange intelligence ? or why
Upon this blasted heath you stop our way
With such prophetic greeting ? Speak, I charge you.

[*Witches vanish.*

Ban. The earth hath bubbles, as the water has,
And these are of them. Whither are they vanish'd ?

Macb. Into the air, and what seem'd corporal melted
As breath into the wind. Would they had stay'd !

Ban. Were such things here as we do speak about ?
Or have we eaten on the insane root
That takes the reason prisoner ?

Macb. Your children shall be kings.

Ban. You shall be king.

Macb. And Thane of Cawdor too ; were it not so ?

Ban. To the self-same tune and words. Who's here ?

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Ban. My noble friend, what causes you to shiver ? You seem to tremble at fair promises, which have nothing harmful in them. I beg you earnestly, are you shadowy beings, or are you indeed what you appear to be outwardly ? You greet my noble friend with honour which he has at present achieved, and with the promise of future greatness, no less than the crown. And he seems to be lost within himself. But you say nothing to me. If you can peep into the future and know beforehand which of the seeds are going to bear fruit, and which are going to rot, speak then to me ; I neither beg any favour of you, nor fear your displeasure.

First Witch. Welcome, Banquo !

Second Witch. Welcome, Banquo !

Third Witch. Welcome, Banquo !

First Witch. You will not be so great as Macbeth, yet you will be greater than he.

Second Witch. You will not be so fortunate as Macbeth, yet you will be more fortunate than he.

Third Witch. You will be the father of kings, though you will not be a king yourself. So let us welcome both of you.

First Witch. Welcome to you, Banquo and Macbeth !

Macb. Wait a minute, you who tell me so little, and leave me groping in the dark. Let me have a little more of light from you. By the death of Sinel, I know that I am Earl of Glamis. But I do not see how I can be Earl of Cawdor. The Earl of Cawdor is still alive, and enjoys high favour at court. But to be king afterwards, seems to be absolutely incredible—as incredible as that I shall be Thane of Cawdor. Tell me from what source you have got this information. Or why you stop me on this withered moorland and greet me with such predictions. I implore you, answer my questions. *[Witches vanish.*

Ban. As the water has bubbles, so the earth may have phantoms, and these creatures must be phantoms of the earth. Where have they disappeared ?

Macb. They have melted into the air. A moment ago, they seemed to be bodily presences ; but now they are no more than air. I wish they had waited a minute.

Ban. I can hardly believe that such creatures were here but a moment ago. Or have we tasted that root which causes madness, and so are we deprived of reasoning ?

Macb. They prophesied that your children would be kings.

Ban. And also that you would be king.

Macb. And I shall be Thane of Cawdor also. Did they not prophesy in that strain ?

Ban. That is what they meant. Who are these persons ?

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Enter Ross *and* Angus

Ross. The king hath happily received, Macbeth,
The news of thy success ; and when he reads
Thy personal venture in the rebels' fight,
His wonders and his praises do contend
Which should be thine or his. Silenced with that,
In viewing o'er the rest o' the self-same day,
He finds thee in the stout Norweyan ranks,
Nothing afeard of what thyself didst make,
Strange images of death. As thick as hail
Come post with post, and every one did bear
Thy praises in the kingdom's great defence,
And pour'd them down before him.

Ang. We are sent
To give thee from our royal master thanks ;
Only to herald thee into his sight,
Not pay thee.

Ross. And for an earnest of a greater honour,
He bade me, from him, call thee Thane of Cawdor :
In which addition, hail, most worthy thane !
For it is thine.

Ban. What ! can the devil speak true ?

Macb. The Thane of Cawdor lives : why do you dress me
In borrow'd robes ?

Ang. Who was the thane lives yet ;
But under heavy judgement bears that life
Which he deserves to lose. Whether he was combined
With those of Norway, or did line the rebel
With hidden help and vantage, or that with both
He labour'd in his country's wreck, I know not,
But treasons capital, confess'd and proved,
Have overthrown him.

Macb. [*Aside.*] Glamis, and Thane of Cawdor :
The greatest is behind.—[*To Ross and Angus.*]
Thanks for your pains.
[*To Ban.*] Do you not hope your children shall be kings,
When those that gave the Thane of Cawdor to me
Promised no less to them ?

Ban. That, trusted home,
Might yet enkindle you into the crown,
Besides the Thane of Cawdor. But 't is strange
And oftentimes, to win us to our harm,
The instruments of darkness tell us truths,
Win us with honest trifles, to betray's
In deepest consequence.
Cousins, a word, I pray you.

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Enter Ross *and* Angus.

Ross. The king has been delighted to hear the news of your victory, Macbeth ; and when he studies the risk you ran in beating back the rebels, he wavers between his astonishment at your brave exploits and the praise which he would feign bestow on you. Unable to express himself caught in this conflict, he goes over the rest of the events that happened on the same day, and finds you in the thick of the fight, cutting your way through the valiant Norwegian troops, least shaken by the ghastly heaps of the dead, which were of your own making—you seemed to be quite used to such images of death. Messengers, bringing these news, came in as quick succession as pellets of hail follow one another. Every one of these messengers was loud in praise of the valiant manner in which you fought in defence of King Duncan's realm and all these praises were dinned in the ears of the king.

Ang. We have been sent here by the king to convey his thanks to you. Further we have been charged to lead you to His Majesty's presence ; the reward for your gallantry is to follow soon.

Ross. And, as a proof of a still greater honour to follow, the king charged me, on his behalf, to greet you as the Earl of Cawdor. With this title let me welcome you, most noble lord, for this title is yours now.

Ban. How is it that the devil can tell the truth ?

Macb. The Earl of Cawdor is still alive. Why do you address me with a title which belongs to another ? .

Ang. He who was the Earl of Cawdor is still alive. But he stands under sentence of death ; his life is already a forfeit, and he deserves to lose it for his misdeeds. I do not know whether he allied himself with the king of Norway, or whether he secretly helped them, or whether he acted against his country by lending his support to both. But acts of blackest treason have been proved against and admitted by him ; this is the cause of his downfall.

Macb. [*Aside.*] I am Thane of Glamis as well as of Cawdor. The greatest honour that has been predicted of me, is still to come. [*To Ross and Angus.*] Let me thank you for your trouble. [*To Banquo.*] Do you not hope that your children shall be kings one day, when those creatures that predicted that I would be Thane of Cawdor, predicted that your children would be kings.

Ban. If you trust these predictions, they can but instigate you to aspire after the crown, in addition to the Thaneship of Cawdor. All the same it is strange : often to tempt us to crime, these agents of the devil tell us truths ; they will win our confidence by telling us truths in unimportant matters, so that they may involve us in matters of deepest import. Friends, let me have a word with you.

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Macb. [*Aside.*] Two truths are told,
As happy prologues to the swelling act
Of the imperial theme. I thank you, gentlemen.
[*Aside.*] This supernatural soliciting
Cannot be ill, cannot be good ; if ill,
Why hath it given me earnest of success.
Commencing in a truth ? I am Thane of Cawdor :
If good, why do I yield to that suggestion
Whose horrid image doth unfix my hair
And make my seated heart knock at my ribs,
Against the use of nature ? Present fears
Are less than horrible imaginings ;
My thought, whose murder yet is but fantastical,
Shakes so my single state of man that function.
Is smother'd in surmise, and nothing is
But what is not.

Ban. Look, how our partner's rapt.

Macb. [*Aside.*] If chance will have me king,
Why, chance may crown me,
Without my stir.

Ban. New honours come upon him,
Like our strange garments, cleave not to their mould
But with the aid of use.

Macb. [*Aside.*] Come what come may,
Time and the hour runs through the roughest day.

Ban. Worthy Macbeth, we stay upon your leisure.

Macb. Give me your favour : my dull brain was wrought
With things forgotten. Kind gentlemen, your pains
Are register'd where every day I turn
The leaf to read them. Let us toward the king.
[*Aside To Banquo.*] Think upon what hath chanced ; and at more time,
The interim having weigh'd it, let us speak
Our free hearts each to other.

Ban. Very gladly.

Macb. Till then, enough. Come, friends. [*Exeunt.*

Scene IV. Forres. The Palace.

Flourish. Enter Duncan, Malcolm, Donalbain, Lennox *and* Attendants.

Dun. Is execution done on Cawdor ? Are not
Those in commission yet return'd ?

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Macb. [*Aside.*] Two of the predictions have already been fulfiled. They may be regarded as a prelude to the high honour thatlawaits me—the kingship which is to follow—I thank you gentlemen. [*Aside.*] This prompting that comes from the spirit of the wlorld can be neither good nor evil ; if it were evil, it could not have given me augury of good luck, with a fair beginning in part fulfilment of predictions. I am Thane of Cawdor. If it were good, why do I envisage that temptation—that crime, the terror of which makes my hairs stand on end and my heart thump against my sides ? It seems to be so unnatural. The vision of the future horrifies me more than what I have to encounter at present. My fancy, which is possessed with the image of murder, moves my being so deeply that my mental faculty is stifled in wild conjecture, and nothing is real to me except what is unreal and non-existent.

Ban. Look, how our comrade is lost in himself.

Macb. [*Aside.*] If it is for chance to make me king, let me then leave it to chance, and take no action myself.

Ban. New honours crowd upon him, and as strange garments which seem to sit ill upon us until we get used to them, these honours seem to embarrass Macbeth.

Macb. [*Aside.*] Let what is to come, come. However, my mind may pass through conflict and tumult, time will one day put an end to all the confusion.

Ban. Noble Macbeth, we are waiting for your leisure to resume our journey.

Macb. I beg your pardon. I was deeply moved by the things which I tried to recall. Dear friends, I shall ever remember the trouble you have taken ; it is recorded in my memory, and everyday I shall turn to it. Let us proceed and meet the king. Think upon what has happened. And when we shall have more leisure, having pondered over the matter in the interval, we might talk it over to each other more freely.

Ban. I shall be very glad to do so.

Macb. We may drop the subject till then. Let us proceed, friends. [*Exeunt.*

Scene IV. Forres. The Palace.

Flourish. Enter Duncan, Malcolm, Donalbain, Lennox *and* Attendants.

Dun. Has the Thane of Cawdor been beheaded ? Have not those officers, charged with the matter, returned ?

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Mal. My liege,
They are not yet come back ; but I have spoke
With one that saw him die ; who did report
That very frankly he confess'd his treasons,
Implored your highness' pardon and set forth
A deep repentance. Nothing in his life
Became him like the leaving it ; he died
As one that had been studied in his death
To throw away the dearest thing he owed
As 't were a careless trifle.

Dun. There's no art
To find the mind's construction in the face :
He was a gentleman on whom I built
An absolute trust.

Enter Macbeth, Banquo, Ross, *and* Angus.

O worthiest cousin !
The sin of my ingratitude even now
Was heavy on me. Thou art so far before
That swiftest wing of recompense is slow
To overtake thee ; would thou hadst less deserved,
That the proportion both of thanks and payment
Might have been mine ! only I have left to say,
More is thy due than more than all can pay.

Macb. The service and the loyalty I owe,
In doing it, pays itself. Your highness' part
Is to receive our duties ; and our duties
Are to your throne and state, children and servants ;
Which do but what they should, by doing everything
Safe toward your love and honour.

Dun. Welcome hither !
I have begun to plant thee, and will labour
To make thee full of growing. Noble Banquo,
That hast no less deserved, nor must be known
No less to have done so, let me infold thee
And hold thee to my heart.

Ban. There if I grow,
The harvest is your own.

Dun. My plenteous joys,
Wanton in fulness, seek to hide themselves
In drops of sorrow. Sons, kinsmen, thanes,
And you whose places are the nearest, know,
We will establish our estate upon
Our eldest, Malcolm, whom we name hereafter
The Prince of Cumberland ; which honour must

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Mal. My lord, they have not yet come back. But I happened to speak with one who saw the Thane of Cawdor die. He reported that he confessed his crime frankly, begged Your Majesty's foregiveness, and manifested a sincere repentance. In fact, he died in the most graceful manner. He died as if he had studied the part before—he did not mind throwing away the most precious thing he possessed as if it were nothing.

Dun. We have no means for reading the thoughts of the mind in the face. He was a gentleman in whom I reposed absolute confidence.

Enter Macbeth, Banquo, Ross *and* Angus.

O noblest cousin ! I was lately being tortured by My sense of ingratitude. By your deeds you have far outrun the reward, which can only be too inadequate to your desert. I wish you had deserved less so that the recompense might bear some proportion to your deeds. All that I can say is that you deserve more than I can ever pay.

Macb. The service and the loyalty which I owe you is a sufficient reward to myself when I can discharge my duty to you. As my King, it is for you to accept my service. As your loyal subjects, it is our duty to obey and serve you as it is the duty of children to obey their parents, and of servants to obey their masters. By doing all that leads to the safety of your personal self to which we owe love and honour, we can but discharge our obligations.

Dun. You are welcome here. This is but the beginning ; I have just planted the seed of your greatness, and it will be my study to make it grow and bear fruit. Noble Banquo, you have deserved as much, and your services will be as fully acknowledged in due time. Let me embrace you.

Ban. If I grow in your affection and confidence, all that I may gain will be yours.

Dun. My exuberant joy, running to excess, hides itself in tears. Sons, kinsmen, nobles, and you who stand nearest to me, be it known to you that we settle our crown upon our eldest son, Malcolm. Henceforth, he will be known as the Prince of Cumberland. The conferring of this honour upon him will

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Not unaccompanied invest him only,
But signs of nobleness, like stars, shall shine
On all deservers. From hence to Inverness,
And bind us further to you.

Macb. The rest is labour, which is not used for you :
I'll be myself the harbinger, and make joyful
The hearing of my wife with your approach ;
So, humbly take my leave.

Dun. My worthy Cawdor !

Macb. [*Aside.*] The Prince of Cumberland ! That is a step
On which I must fall down, or else o'erleap,
For in my way it lies. Stars, hide your fires !
Let not light see my back and deep desires ;
The eye wink at the hand ; yet let that be
Which the eye fears, when it is done, to see. [*Exit.*

Dun. True, worthy Banquo ; he is full so valiant,
And in his commendations I am fed ;
It is a banquet to me. Let's after him,
Whose care is gone before to bid us welcome :
It is a peerless kinsman. [*Flourish. Exeunt.*

Scene V. Inverness. Macbeth's *Castle.*

Enter Lady Macbeth, *reading a letter.*

Lady Macb. "They met me in the day of success ; and I have learned by the perfectest report, they have more in them than mortal knowledge. When I burned in desire to question them further, they made themselves air, into which they vanished. While I stood rapt in the wonder of it, came missives from the king, who all-hailed me, 'Thane of Cawdor' ; by which title, before, these weird sisters saluted me, and referred me to the coming on of time, with 'Hail, king that shalt be !' This have I thought good to deliver thee, my dearest partner of greatness, that thou mightest not lose the dues of rejoicing, by being ignorant of what greatness is promised thee. Lay it to thy heart, and farewell."
Glamis thou art, and Cawdor ; and shalt be
What thou art promised. Yet do I fear thy nature ;
It is too full o'the milk of human kindness
To catch the nearest way : thou wouldst be great,
Art not without ambition, but without
The illness should attend it ; what thou wouldst highly,
That wouldst thou holily ; wouldst not play false,
And yet wouldst wrongly win ; thou 'dst have, great Glamis,
That which cries 'Thus thou must do, if thou have it' ;

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be accompanied by honours and dignities that shall go to all who deserve. From here let us proceed to Inverness, which will be an occasion of stronger affection between us.

Macb. Even the rest, which is not employed in your service, is irksome to me. I shall myself go ahead, and carry the happy news to my wife. Let me humbly take leave of you.

Dun. My noble Cawdor !

Macb. [*Aside.*] So Malcolm is to be the Prince of Cumberland ! I may either stumble over this step, or get over it, for it is an obstacle in my way. Let the stars hide their flame ! Let no light peep into the sinful desires which my heart harbours. Let the eye close itself to what the hand executes ! Let it be accomplished, which the eye shrinks from gazing at.

Dun. You are very right noble Banquo ; he is so fully brave and it is ever a pleasure to me to praise him. It is a feast to me. Let us follow him ; he has gone in advance because he is so solicitous to give us a right welcome. He is a matchless kinsman.

[*Flourish Exeunt.*

Scene V. Inverness. Macbeth's *Castle.*

Enter Lady Macbeth, *reading a letter.*

Lady Macb.—"They met me on the day of victory ; and I have absolutely reliable information that they possess more than human knowledge. When I was too eager to ask them further question, they melted into the air and vanished. While I stood, amazed at the strangeness of the thing, messengers came from the king who greeted me as Thane of Cawdor. With the same title the witches had already greeted me, and predicted for me further honour, no less than kingship. I have thought it advisable to communicate this news to you, the dearest partner in my greatness, so that you might not miss the necessary degree of joy, if you had been ignorant of the greatness that has been predicted for me. Cherish it in your heart, and farewell for the present."

You are already Thane of Glamis and Thane of Cawdor, and it will be my business to see that you achieve what has been predicted. But I have misgivings about your disposition. You have too tender a heart, and you may refuse to take the shortest route to success. You have the ambition to be great, but you would have nothing to do with the unscrupulous means by which it can be achieved. What you must passionately aspire after, you must achieve by fair means. You would not play the traitor, yet you want to secure that which you can win only by unscrupulous means. Lord of Glamis you are aware what you are aiming at, it tells you plainly how you should proceed if you want

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And that which rather thou dost fear to do
Than wishest should be undone. Hie thee hither,
That I may pour my spirits in thine ear,
And chastise with the valour of my tongue
All that impedes thee from the golden round,
Which fate and metaphysical aid doth seem
To have thee crown'd withal.

Enter a Messenger.

What is your tidings ?

Mess. The king comes here to-night.

Lady Macb. Thou'rt mad to say it.
Is not thy master with him ? who, were't so,
Would have inform'd for preparation.

Mess. So please you, it is true : our thane is coming :
One of my fellows had the speed of him,
Who, almost dead for breath, had scarcely more
Than would make up his message.

Lady Macb. Give him tending :
He brings great news, [*Exit Messenger.*

The raven himself is hoarse

That croaks the fatal entrance of Duncan
Under my battlements. Come, you spirits
That tend on mortal thoughts ! unsex me here,
And fill me from the crown to the toe top full
Of direst cruelty ; make thick my blood,
Stop up the access and passage to remorse,
That no compunctious visitings of nature
Shake my fell purpose, nor keep peace between
The effect and it ! Come to my woman's breasts,
And take my milk for gall, you murdering ministers,
Wherever in your sightless substances
You wait on nature's mischief ! Come, thick night,
And pall thee in the dunnest smoke of hell,
That my keen knife see not the wound it makes,
Nor heaven peep through the blanket of the dark,
To cry 'Hold, hold !'

Enter Macbeth.

Great Glamis ! worthy Cawdor !
Greater than both, by the all-hail hereafter !
Thy letters have transported me beyond
This ignorant present, and I feel now
The future in the instant.

Macb. My dearest love,
Duncan comes here to-night.

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to attain it, but you rather hold back from doing what would lead to success ; yet at the same time you do not wish that it should remain undone. Come quickly to me ; let me infuse my spirit into you and incite you with my words until your vacillation to seize the crown, which is offered to you by fate and supernatural agency, is quite overcome.

Enter a Messenger.

What news do you bring ?

Mess. The king is coming here to-night.

Lady Macb. You seem to have gone out of your mind to say so. Is not your master coming with him ? Your master if the king were coming, would have informed me beforehand so that I might prepare a welcome for him.

Mess. If it may please you, the news is true. Our lord is also coming. One of my companions had the start of him. He has just arrived, and is out of breath, and can barely deliver the message.

Lady Macb. Look well after him ; he brings very important news. [*Exit Messenger.*

The raven himself, who announces the ill-fated arrival of Duncan under my embattled towers, cries himself hoarse. I summon the powers of evil that attend murderous thoughts, to take away from me all feminine tenderness of feeling ; let me be filled with bloody thoughts from head to foot ! Let my blood curdle, admitting no passage to compassion, so that I may not be held back by any natural remorse from carrying out the cruel purpose, and nothing may come between the purpose and its execution. Let the woman's heart in me be filled with murderous thoughts, and let my tenderness he turned into bitterness. I pray to you, O powers of evil, that attend unseen on wicked deeds done in the world. Let dark night come and warp herself in the gloomiest smoke of hell, so that my sharp-edged knife cannot see the wound it inflicts, nor let heaven peep through the curtain of darkness and cry 'forbear' !

Enter Macbeth.

O Lord of Glamis ! Lord of Cawdor ! Surely you are greater than either—let me greet you in anticipation. Your letters have carried me beyond the limits of the present, which seems to be ignorant of your coming honours. I envisage the future in the present.

Macb. My dearest, Duncan is coming here to-night.

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Lady Macb. And when goes hence ?

Macb. To-morrow, as he purposes.

Lady Macb. O ! never
Shall sun that morrow see
Your face, my thane, is as a book where men
May read strange matters. To beguile the time,
Look like the time ; bear welcome in your eye,
Your hand, your tongue : look like the innocent flower,
But be the serpent under't. He that's coming
Must be provided for ; and you shall put
This night's great business into my dispatch ;
Which shall to all our nights and days to come
Give solely sovereign sway and masterdom.

Macb. We will speak further.

Lady Macb. Only look up clear ;
To alter favour ever is to fear.
Leave all the rest to me. [*Exeunt.*

Scene VI. Before Macbeth's *Castle.*

Hautboys and torches. Enter Duncan, Malcolm, Donalbain, Banquo, Lennox, Macduff, Ross, Angus *and* Attendants.

Dun. This castle hath a pleasant seat ; the air
Nimbly and sweetly recommends itself
Unto our gentle senses.

Ban. This guest of summer,
The temple-haunting marlet, does approve
By his loved mansionry, that the heaven's breath
Smells wooingly here : no jutty, frieze,
Buttress, nor coign of vantage, but this bird
Hath made his pendent bed and procreant cradle :
Where they most breed and haunt, I have observed
The air is delicate.

Enter Lady Macbeth.

Dun. See, see, our honour'd hostess !
The love that follows us sometime is our trouble,
Which still we thank as love. Herein I teach you
How you shall bid God 'ild us for your pains,
And thank us for your trouble.

Lady Macb. All our service,
In every point twice done, and then done double,
Were poor and single business, to contend
Against those honours deep and broad, wherewith
Your majesty loads our house : for those of old,
And the late dignities heap'd up to them,
We rest your hermits.

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Lady Macb. And when does he go from here ?

Macb. He proposes to leave to-morrow.

Lady Macb. Let me hope that the sun shall never see that morrow ! Your face, my lord, is as plain as an open book where one can read strange things. You should mask the intention of your heart in innocent look to mislead these about you. Let your eye, or hand, or tongue, proclaim welcome. You should assume the innocent look of the flower, while you act as the serpent beneath it. He who is coming, must be disposed of : you must put the task of this night into my hands, for it shall give to all our nights and days to come, an absolute lordship and sovereignty.

Macb. We should discuss that affair more freely.

Lady Macb. You should keep up a steady and bright look. Any change in the expression of your face is a sign of fear ; leave everything to me. *[Exeunt.*

Scene ~~IV.~~ Before Macbeth's *Castle.*

Hautboys and torches. Enter Duncan, Malcolm, Donalbain, Banquo, Lennox, Macduff, Ross, Angus *and* Attendants.

Dun. This castle is most charmingly situated ; the air that blows briskly, and has a sweet fragrance, is welcome to the senses.

Ban. The martin, the bird of summer, which seeks the church to build its nest in, has built her nest here, and thereby seems to prove that the air is fresh and invitingly fragrant here. There is hardly a projection, or a frieze on the top of the columns, a buttress, or any advantageous corner, where the bird has built her hanging nest, and is rearing her young. It is my experience that where these birds make their nests against the breeding season, the air is very pleasant.

Enter Lady Macbeth.

Dun. Look ! here comes our honourable hostess. The affection which pursues us everywhere, sometimes embarrasses us, still we accept it gratefully. Following my example, you should askGod to bless us for the trouble that we are giving you, and yourself, and also thank us for it.

Lady Macb. Set against those extensive and numerous honours which Your Majesty has bestowed upon us whatever service we can render to you, even if it were repeated twice and four times oyer, would be but a poor return. For honours bestowed in the past and those lately added, we shall ever remain grateful to you, and pray for your welfare.

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Dun. Where's the Thane of Cawdor ?
We coursed him at the heels, and had a purpose
To be his purveyor ; but he rides well,
And his great love, sharp as his spur, hath holp him
To his home before us. Fair and noble hostess,
We are your guest to-night.

Lady Macb. Your servants ever
Have theirs, themselves, and what is theirs, in compt,
To make their audit at your highness' pleasure.
Still to return your own.

Dun. Give me your hand ;
Conduct me to mine host : we love him highly,
And shall continue our graces towards him.
By your leave, hostess. [*Exeunt.*

Scene VII. Macbeth's *Castle*

Hautboys and torches. Enter and pass over the stage.
a Sewer, and divers Servants *with dishes and service*
Then enter Macbeth

Macb. If it were done when 't is done, then 't were well
It were done quickly ; if the assassination
Could trammel up the consequence, and catch
With his surcease success ; that but this blow
Might be the be-all and the end-all here,
But here, upon this bank and shoal of time,
We'd jump the life to come. But in these cases
We still have judgement here ; that we but teach
Bloody instructions, which, being taught, return
To plague the inventor, this even-handed justice
Commends the ingredients of our poison'd chalice
To our own lips. He's here in double trust :
First, as I am his kinsman and his subject,
Strong both against the deed ; then, as his host,
Who should against his murderer shut the door,
Not bear the knife myself. Besides, this Duncan
Hath borne his faculties so meek, hath been
So clear in his great office, that his virtues
Will plead like angels trumpet-tongued against
The deep damnation of his taking-off ;
And pity, like a naked new-born babe,
Striding the blast, or heaven's cherubin, horsed
Upon the sightless couriers of the air,
Shall blow the horrid deed in every eye,
That tears shall drown the wind. I have no spur
To prick the sides of my intent, but only
Vaulting ambition, which o'erleaps itself,
And falls on the other—

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Dun. Where is the Thane of Cawdor ? We followed him close at the heels, and intended to be here ahead of him. But it seems that he is a fast rider, and his devotion has acted like a spur, and brought him home before us. Fair and noble hostess, we are your guests for to-night.

Lady Macb. Like your other subjects, we always hold our lives and fortunes but in trust for you, of which we are liable to give you an account whenever Your Majesty may desire. It will be no more than returning to you what really belongs to you all the time.

Dun. Let me take your hand ! lead me to my host. We hold him in high esteem and shall continue our favour towards him. With your permission, kind hostess.

[*Exeunt.*

Scene VII. Macbeth's *Castle.*

Hautboys and torches. Enter a Sewer, *and divers* servants *with dishes and service, and pass over the stage.*

Then enter Macbeth.

Macb. If nothing were to follow when it is done, then it would be better if it were done as quickly as possible. If the act of murder could hold up the consequence, and achieve the result as soon as it were done ; if this stroke could be the final stroke here on earth with nothing to follow hereafter, standing as I do on the brink of this earthly existence, I would rather risk the life to come to fulfil my desire. But in things like these, the judgment is ever executed on earth. We set the example of sin, and it is followed by others, and comes to torment us. Justice which deals equally with all to hold the cup of poison that we ourselves have prepared to our own lips. The king is here, and claims a double duty from me. First, as I am his kinsman and his subject, I must have an aversion to this murder ; secondly as I am his host, it is my duty to protect him from his murderer, far from me be it to play the murderer myself. Further, my King Duncan has borne himself so modestly, has been so innocent in the discharge of his kingly duties, that his virtues will cry out like angels against his murder, so damnable a crime ; and pity personified like a naked new-born baby, riding the wind or like the heavenly angel (cherub) borne on the invisible wings of the air, shall proclaim the horrible crime from one end of the earth to the other, so that there will be universal lamentation. I have no incentive to urge on my purpose, but immoderate ambition, which may defeat itself by its excess.

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Enter Lady Macbeth.

How now ! what news ?

Lady Macb. He has almost supp'd : why have you left the chamber ?

Macb. Hath he ask'd for me ?

Lady Macb. Know you not he has ?

Macb. We will proceed no further in this business :
He hath honour'd me of late ; and I have bought
Golden opinions from all sorts of people,
Which would be worn now in their newest gloss,
Not cast aside so soon.

Lady Macb. Was the hope drunk
Wherein you dress'd yourself ? hath it slept since,
And wakes it now, to look so green and pale
At what it did so freely ? From this time
Such I account thy love. Art thou afeard
To be the same in thine own act and valour
As thou art in desire ? Would'st thou have that
Which thou esteem'st the ornament of life,
And live a coward in thine own esteem,
Letting 'I dare not' wait upon 'I would'
Like the poor cat i' the adage ?

Macb. Prithee, peace.
I dare do all that may become a man ;
Who dares do more is none.

Lady Macb. What beast was't then.
That made you break this enterprise to me ?
When you drust do it then you were a man ;
And to be more than what you were, you would
Be so much more the man. Nor time nor place
Did then adhere, and yet you would make both :
They have made themselves, and that their fitness now
Does unmake you. I have given suck, and know
How tender 't is to love the babe that milks me :
I would while it was smiling in my face,
Have pluck'd my nipple from his boneless gums,
And dash'd the brains out, had I so sworn as you
Have done to this.

Macb. If we should fail,

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Enter Lady Macbeth.

What is the news that you bring ?

Lady Macb. He has almost finished his supper. Why have you left the chamber ?

Macb. Did he inquire of me ?

Lady Macb. Do you not know that he has ?

Macb. We shall not go any further in this deed. He has honoured me lately ; and I have earned highest esteem from all kinds of people, and I wish that I could keep it as fresh as ever, not lose it so soon.

Lady Macb. Was it deluding hope which you cherished a little while ago ? Has it gone to sleep since then ? Does it wake up now and tremble at the sight of what it cherished so freely ? Henceforth I regard your love as of no worth. Are you afraid to realise in action and with your courage what you are already in your desire ? Do you desire to have that which you consider to be highest glory in life, and yet live like a coward in your own opinion, because you have not courage to achieve what you desire so much in your heart and behave like the proverbial cat (who wanted to eat fish without wetting her feet ?)

Macb. I pray, no more of it. I have the courage to do all that is worthy of a man. He who steps beyond that limit, is no man at all.

Lady Macb. Was it no man but a beast that communicated this purpose to me ? When you had the courage to form the plan, then you were a man ; by carrying it out now, you would prove yourself the more a man. Neither time nor place was then favourable to you, yet you were prepared to make the best of them. Now time and place are both fit, and you hold back. Suppose I have suckled and know what it is to love the baby that sucks me, I would, while it was smiling at me, have snatched him away from my breast, and dashed out his brain. If I had promised to do so as you have done in this matter.

Macb. Suppose we fail in our enterprise ?

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Lady Macb. We fail.
But screw your courage to the sticking-place,
And well not fail. When Duncan is asleep,
Whereto the rather shall his day's hard journey
Soundly invite him, his two chamberlains
Will I with wine and wassial so convince
That memory, the warder of the brain,
Shall be a fume, and the receipt of reason
A limbeck only; when in swinish sleep
Their drenched natures lie as in a death,
What cannot you and I perform upon
The unguarded Duncan ? what not put upon
His spongy officers, who shall bear the guilt
Of our great quell ?

Macb. Bring forth men-children only ;
For thy undaunted mettle should compose
Nothing but males. Will it not be received,
When we have mark'd with blood those sleepy two
Of his own chamber and used their very daggers,
That they have done't ?

Lady Macb. Who dares receive it other,
As we shall mark our griefs and clamour roar
Upon his death ?

Macb. I am settled, and bend up
Each corporal agent to this terrible feat.
Away, and mock the time with fairest show :
False face must hide what the false heart doth know.

[Exeunt.

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Lady Macb. How can you think of that ! Summon your courage, and let it not ebb away and in that case we cannot fail. When Duncan is asleep—and the hardship of the day's journey shall call him to sound sleep—I shall so overcome his two attendants with wine that their memory which keeps watch over the brain, shall blow up into vapour, and their reason shall be stupefied. When they lie in drunken sleep, which does not differ much from death, you and I can do anything upon Duncan who is left unprotected. Then we can put upon his drunken attendants all the guilt of the murder that we have committed.

Macb. Bear only men-children, for your fearless spirit breed only males. Do you not think that it will be believed that we have done the murder, when we have put the stains of blood on these two sleepy attendants, after using their very daggers for the purpose of murder ?

Lady Macb. None can dispute it, for we shall make a loud demonstration of our grief on his death.

Macb. I have made up my mind, and brace myself up, including every bodily organ, to perpetrate this horrible deed. You may go and put on the most smiling face, and deceive the people around me. A masked face must conceal the treachery in the heart.

[Exeunt.

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ACT II

Scene I. Inverness. Court within the castle.

Enter Banquo, *and* Fleance *bearing a torch before him.*

Ban. How goes the night, boy ?

Fle. The moon is down ; I have not heard the clock.

Ban. And she goes down at twelve.

Fle. I take't, 't is later, sir.

Ban. Hold, take my sword. There's husbandry in heaven ;
Their candles are all out. Take thee that too.
A heavy summons lies like lead upon me,
And yet I would not sleep : merciful powers !
Restrain in me the cursed thoughts that nature
Gives way to in repose.

Enter Macbeth, *and a* Servant *with a torch.*

Give me my sword.
Who's there ?

Macb. A friend.

Ban. What, sir ! not yet at rest ? The king's a-bed :
He hath been in unusual pleasure, and
Sent forth great largess to your offices.
This diamond he greets your wife withal,
By the name of most kind hostess ; and shut up
In measureless content.

Macb. Being unprepared,
Our will became the servant to defect,
Which else should free have wrought.

Ban. All's well.
I dreamt last night of the three weird sisters :
To you they have show'd some truth.

Macb. I think not of them :
Yet, when we can entreat an hour to serve,
We would spend it in some words upon that business,
If you would grant the time.

Ban. At your kind'st leisure.

Macb. If you shall cleave to my consent, when 't is,
It shall make honour for you.

Ban. So I lose none
In seeking to augment it, but still keep
My bosom franchised and allegiance clear,
I shall be counsell'd.

Macb. Good repose the while !

Ban. Thanks, sir : the like to you.

[Exeunt Banquo and Fleance.

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ACT II

Scene I. Inverness. Court of Macbete's *Castle*

Enter Banquo, *and* Fleance *bearing a torch before him.*

Ban. What hour of the night is it, my son ?

Fle. The moon has set ; I did not hear the clock going.

Ban. And the moon sets at twelve to night.

Fle. I suppose it is later, sir.

Ban. Here take my sword. There seems to be economy of light in the heavens. They have extinguished all their candles. Take this also. Sleep hangs heavy on my eyelids and yet I have no desire to sleep. Heavenly powers, curb in me the wicked thoughts that nature yields to in sleep.
Give me my sword, who comes here ?

Enter Macbeth, and a Servant *with a torch.*

Macb. A friend.

Ban. Are you not yet in bed, sir ? The king is asleep. He has been very much pleased with your welcome and hospitality ; and has sent forth handsome rewards to your household staff. He presents this diamond to your wife, as the kindest hostess he has even seen. He has gone to rest highly gratified.

Macb. Unprepared as we were, we could not give him a fitting welcome in spite of all our wishes, which in other circumstances, we might have given effect to.

Ban. It is all right as it is. Last night I dreamt of the three witches. Part of their predictions has come true in your case.

Macb. I have dismissed all thought of them from my mind. Yet when we can spare an hour or so, I should like to talk it over with you, if you can give me your time.

Ban. If you have the leisure, please.

Macb. If you will go by my advice, when the time comes, I shall make it worth while to you so that it will bring you more honour.

Ban. Provided I compromise none of my honour in trying to increase it, I am willing to follow your advice, when it leaves either my conscience or my loyalty free and unaffected.

Macb. In the meantime may you have good sleep !

Ban. Thank you sir : I wish the same to you !

[*Exeunt Banquo and Fleance.*

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Macb. Go bid thy mistress, when my drink is ready
She strike upon the bell. Get thee to bed. [*Exit* Servant.
Is this a dagger which I see before me,
The handle toward my hand ? Come, let me clutch thee :
I have thee not, and yet I see thee still.
Art thou not, fatal vision, sensible
To feeling as to sight ? or art thou but
A dagger of the mind, a false creation,
Proceeding from the heat-oppressed brain ?
I see thee yet, in form as palpable
As this which now I draw.
Thou marshall'st me the way that I was going,
And such an instrument I was to use.
Mine eyes are made the fools o' the other senses.
Or else worth all the rest : I see thee still ;
And on thy blade and dudgeon gouts of blood,
Which was not so before. There's no such thing :
It is the bloody business which informs
Thus to mine eyes. Now o'er the one half-world
Nature seems dead, and wicked dreams abuse
The curtain'd sleep ; witchcraft celebrates
Pale Hecate's offerings ; and wither'd murder,
Alarum'd by his sentinel, the wolf,
Whose howl's his watch, thus with his stealthy pace,
With Tarquin's ravishing strides, towards his design
Moves like a ghost. Thou sure and firm-set earth,
Hear not my steps, which way they walk, for fear
Thy very stones prate of my whereabout,
And take the present horror from the time,
Which now suits with it. Whiles I threat he lives.
Words to the heat of deeds too cold breath gives.

[*A bell rings.*

I go, and it is done ; the bell invites me,
Here it not, Duncan ; for it is a knell
That summons thee to heaven or to hell. [*Exit.*

Scene II. The Same.

Enter Lady Macbeth.

Lady Macb. That which hath made them drunk hath made me bold,
What hath quench'd them hath given me fire. Hark ! Peace !
It was the owl that shriek'd the fatal bellman,
Which gives the stern'st good-night. He is about it :
The door are open, and the surfeited grooms
Do mock their charge with snores : I have drugg'd their possets,
That death and nature do contend about them.
Whether they live or die.

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Macb. Go and tell your mistress that she rings the bell when my drink is ready. You may go to bed. [*Exit Servant.*] What do I see hanging before my eyes? It is a dagger, whose handle stretches towards my hand? Well, let me catch hold of you. But you seem to elude my grasp and yet you are still before my eyes. Are you not, fanciful phantom, perceptible to touch as you are perceptible to sight? Or are you only a creation of the mind, a phantom, starting from the brain which is over-excited? I see you still; hardly differing in material shape from the one which now I draw. You lead me the way that I was going. And I was to use such a dagger. Either my eyes are victimised by other senses, or all the other senses are at fault, and my eyes alone are right. You are still before my eyes and now I see drops of blood on your blade which was at first stainless. It must be an illusion. The bloody task that I am going to undertake, seems to take shape before my eyes in the form of a dagger. One half of the world is now at rest and foul dreams beguile the men, lying asleep in their curtained beds. It is the time when witches worship pale Hecate, and make offerings to her, when the gaunt murderer, called both by the howling of the wolf, who acts as his sentinel, with muffled steps like mine, pacing like Tarquin when he was on his way to ravish Lucretia, glides on like the ghost to carry out his murderous design. You stable and firmly established earth, may you not hear my steps, or take not which way they proceed, let the very pebbles echo the sound, and rob the time of the horror to which it is so suited. While I waste my time in idle threats, he continues to be alive. Mere words can but infuse little vehemence into action. [*A bell rings.*] I am coming and it will be soon over. The bell summons me. Duncan, may you not hear it, for it is the death-bell which summons you either to heaven or to hell.

[*Exit.*

Scene II. The Same.

Enter Lady Macbeth.

Lady Macb. The liquor which has stupefied them has armed me with courage. What has extinguished all their spirits, has set me on fire. Listen! Hush! it was the owl that cried, an ominous bird, which like the crier at Newgate, summons the doomed to death. He is doing the deed now. The doors are open; and the drunk attendants are snoring in their sleep, regardless of their duty. I have doped their liquor so that there is now a struggle between life and death in them.

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Macb. [*Within.*] Who's there ? what, ho !

Lady Macb. Alack ! I am afraid they have awaked,
And 't is not done, the attempt and not the deed
Confounds us. Hark ! I laid their daggers ready ;
He could not miss 'em. Had he not resembled
My father as he slept, I had done 't. My husband !

Enter Macbeth.

Macb. I have done the deed. Didst thou not hear a noise ?

Lady Macb. I heard the owl scream and the crickets cry.
Did not you speak ?

Macb. When ?

Lady Macb. Now.

Macb. As I descended ?

Lady Macb. Ay.

Macb. Hark !
Who lies i' the second chamber ?

Lady Macb. Donalbain.

Macb. This is a sorry sight. [*Looking on his hands.*

Lady Macb. A foolish thought to say a sorry sight.

Macb. There's one did laugh in's sleep, and one cried 'Murder !'
That they did wake each other : I stood and heard them ;
But they did say their prayers, and address'd them
Again to sleep.

Lady Macb. There are two lodged together.

Macb. One cried, 'God bless us !' and 'Amen !' the other ;
As they had seen me with these hangman's hands.
Listening their fear, I could not say 'Amen'
When they did say 'God bless us !'

Lady Macb. Consider it not so deeply.

Macb. But therefore could not I pronounce 'Amen' ?
I had most need of blessing, and 'Amen'
Stuck in my throat.

Lady Macb. These deeds must not be thought
After these ways ; so, it will make us mad.

Macb. Methought I heard a voice cry 'Sleep no more !
Macbeth does murder sleep,' the innocent sleep,
Sleep that knits up the ravell'd sleave of care,
The death of each day's life, sore labour's bath,
Balm of hurt minds, great nature's second conrse,
Chief nourisher in life's feast,—

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Macb. [*Within.*] Who is there ? What, ho !

Lady Macb. Alas, I am afraid they have waked up, and the deed has not been accomplished. We shall be ruined by the mere attempt, if it is not successful. Hark ! I laid their daggers ready. He could not have miscarried. If he had not resembled my father as he was asleep, I would have done it. My husband comes.

Enter Macbeth

Macb. I have done it. Did you not hear a noise ?

Lady Macb. I heard the owl cry and the cricket chirp. Did you speak ?

Macb. When ?

Lady Macb. Now.

Macb. As I descended ?

Lady Macb. Yes.

Macb. Listen. Who is sleeping in the second chamber ?

Lady Macb. Donalbain.

Macb. This is a dismal sight. [*Looking on his hands.*

Lady Macb. It is a silly thought to say so.

Macb. One seemed to have laughed in his sleep and the other cried 'murder !' They waked up each other ; I stood and listened to them ; they said their prayers, and again composed themselves to sleep.

Lady Macb. Two of them are sleeping together.

Macb. One cried 'God bless us !' and the other cried 'So be it.' As if they had seen me with these blood-stained hands. When I heard them resigning themselves to the protection of God in fear, I could not say 'Amen' to their prayer.

Lady Macb. Do not take it so seriously.

Macb. But why could I not say 'Amen ?' I needed God's blessing most at the time, but I could not get 'Amen' out of my throat.

Lady Macb. You must not brood over these things thus; if you do so, we will go mad.

Macb. I fancied I heard a voice cry, 'Sleep no more ! Macbeth is murdering sleep itself.' I suppose I have outraged and killed innocent sleep, sleep that composes and soothes all the cares of the mind, which puts an end to the activities of the day, and brings relief to all fatigue,—sleep that is the care to the aching hearts, and restorative provided by nature, and the chief sustainer of life.

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Lady Macb. What do you mean !

Macb. Still it cried, 'Sleep no more !' to all the house :
'Glamis hath murder'd sleep, and therefore Cawdor
Shall sleep no more, Macbeth shall sleep no more !'

Lady Macb. Who was it that thus cried ? Why, worthy thane,
You do unbend your noble strength to think
So brainsickly of things. Go get some water,
And wash this filthy witness from your hand.
Why did you bring these daggers from the place ?
They must lie there : go carry them, and smear
The sleeply grooms with blood.

Macb. I' ll go no more :
I am afraid to think what I have done ;
Look on't again I dare not.

Lady Macb. Infirm of purpose !
Give me the daggers. The sleeping and the dead
Are but as pictures ; 't is the eye of childhood
That fears a painted devil. If he do bleed,
I' ll gild the faces of the grooms withal ;
For it must seem their guilt. [*Exit. Knocking within.*

Macb. Whence is that knocking ?
How is 't with me when every noise appals me ?
What hands are here ? Ha ! they pluck out mine eyes.
Will all great Neptune's ocean wash this blood
Clean from my hand ? No, this my hand will rather
The multitudinous seas incarnadine,
Making the green one red.

Re-enter Lady Macbeth.

Lady Macb. My hands are of your colour, but I shame
To wear a heart so white. [*Knocking within.*
I hear a knocking
At the south entry ; retire we to our chamber ;
A little water clears us of this deed ;
How easy is it then ! Your constancy
Hath left you unattended. [*Knocking within.*
Hark ! more knocking.
Get on your night-gown, lest occasion call us,
And show us to be watchers. Be not lost
So poorly in your thoughts.

Macb. To know my deed 't were best not know myself.
[*Knocking within.*
WakeDuncan with thy knocking ! I would thou couldst !
[*Exeunt.*

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Lady Macb. What do you mean ?

Macb. The voice kept on crying, 'sleep no more,' and it echoed through all the house. It said 'the thane of Glamis has murdered sleep and therefore, there will be no sleep for the thane of Cawdor ; Macbeth shall sleep no more.'

Lady Macb. Who was it that cried thus ? Why, noble lord, you betray your own weakness to think so feverishly of such things. Go, get some water, and wash the stains of blood from your hand. Why did you bring these daggers from the room ? They must lie where they were found. Go and carry them, and daub the sleeping attendants with blood.

Macb. I will go no more. I shudder to think that what I have done. I cannot bring myself to look on it again.

Lady Macb. O how weak in purpose you are ? Give me the daggers. There is little difference between the sleeping and the dead. It is a mere child who may start in fear at the picture of a devil. If he bleeds, I will smear the faces of the attendants with his blood, for we must make it appear to be their guilt.

[*Exit. Knocking within.*

Macb. Where from do we hear that knocking ? I do not know what is the matter with me when every noise startles me. What hands do I see here ? They seem to prod into my eyes. Will all the oceans of the world wash away this stain of blood from my hand ? I rather think that this hand of mine will rurn all the waters of the sea into crimson, so that the dark green water will become all red.

Re-enter Lady Macbeth.

Lady Macb. My hands are red as yours, But I am ashamed to have a heart so white in colour (cowardly as your. [*Knocking within.*] I hear a knocking at the south gate. Let us retire to bed. A handful to water washes away all signs of guilt. How easy it is then to make good our innocence. You seem to have lost your firmness of purpose. [*knocking within.*] Listen ! There is more knocking. Put on your dressing-gown let it might be necessary for us to get up, but it must not be seen that we have been awake. Be not so dazed, whatever your thoughts may be.

Macb. I would better forget myself if I were to know what I have done. [*Knocking within.*] You may as well wake Duncan with your knocking ! I wish that you could do it. [*Exeunt.*

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Scene III. The Same.

Enter a Porter.

Porter. Here's a knocking indeed ! If a man were porter of hell-gate he should have old turning the key.

[*Knocking within.*

Knock, knock, knock ! Who's there, i' the name of Beelzebub ? Here's a farmer that hanged himself on the expectation of plenty : come in time ; have napkins enow about you, here you'll sweat for 't.

[*Knocking within.*

Knock, knock ! Who's there, in the other devil's name ? Faith, here's an equivocator, that could swear in both the scales, against either scale ; who committed treason enough for God's sake yet could not equivocate to heaven : O ! come in, equivacator.

[*Knocking within.*

Knock, knock, knock ! Who's there ? Faith, here's an English tailor come hither for stealing out of a French hose : come in, tailor ; here you may roast your goose.

[*Knocking within.*

Knock, knock ! never at quiet ! What are you ? But this place is too cold for hell. I'll devilporter it no further : I had thought to have let in some of all professions, that go the primrose way to the everlasting bonfire.

[*Knocking within.*

Anon, anon ! I pray you, remember the porter.

[*Open thegate.*

Enter Macduff *and* Lennox.

Macd. Was it so late, friend, ere you went to bed, That you do lie so late ?

Port. Faith, sir, we were carousing till the second cock;

Macd. I believe drink gave thee the lie last night.

Port. That it did, sir, i' the very throat o' me : but I requited him for his lie ; and, I think, being too strong for him, though he took up my legs sometime, yet I made a shift to cast him.

Macd. Is thy master stirring ?

Enter Macbeth

Our knocking has awaked him ; here he comes.

Len. Good morrow, noble sir.

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Scene III. The Same.

Enter a Porter [*Knocking within.*

Porter. What a tremendous knocking ! If a man were porter of the hell-gate, how busy he would be kept turning the key to open the gate. [*Knocking within.*] Yes, go on knocking. Who is there in the name of the devil ? Oh, here comes a farmer who hanged himself to death in anticipation of a plentiful harvest and of the consequent fall in the price of corn. You have come at a good time, farmer. I hope you have a good supply of handkerchiefs with you, for you will have to sweat here in the flaming heat of hell. [*Knocking within.*] Yes, go on knocking. Who comes now, in the name of the other devil. Here is indeed a Jesuit Quibbler, who could swear on both sides of the question, who was guilty of treason against the king and truth in the name of God, yet his quibbling did not help him to go to heaven. You are welcome, Mr. quibbler. [*Knocking wiihin.*] Yes, go on knocking. Who comes next ? Well, it is an English tailor, who has been sent to hell for stealing cloth that was given him to make a pair of French breeches. You are welcome, Mr. Tailor. Here there is sufficient flame to heat your smoothing iron. [*Knocking within.*] There seems to be no end to this knocking. Who is it this time ? But this place is not hot enough to be hell. It is no good playing the porter of the hell-gate any longer. I had a mind to have admitted some of men of all professions who follow the easy path of life to hell, where the fire burns eternally. [*Knocking within.*] Yes, yes presently. Please do not forget the humble gate-keeper.

[*Opens the gate.*

Enter Macduff, *and* Lennox.

Macd. Was it very late, friend when you went to bed, that you lie in bed so late in the morning ?

Port. Indeed sir. We were having a merry time of it with drink and revelry till about three o' clock in the morning, when the cock crowed for the second time.

Macd. I suppose drink made you lie last night by tripping you down.

Port. That is true, sir, it did make me lie in my very throat, sir, but I stood my ground against it, though occasionally my legs stumbled. Yet at last I managed to cast it down—out of my throat.

Macd. Is your master out of bed ?

Enter Macbeth.

Our knocking has called him out of bed ; here he is coming.

Len. Good morning, noble lord.

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Macb. Good morrow, both.

Macd. Is the king stirring, worthy thane ?

Macb. Not yet.

Macd. He did command me to call timely on him :
I have almost slipp'd the hour.

Macb. I'll bring you to him.

Macd. I know this is a joyful trouble to you ;
But yet 't is one.

Macb. The labour we delight in physics pain.
This is the door.

Macd. I'll make so bold to call,
For 't is my limited service. [*Exit.*

Len. Goes the King hence to-day ?

Macb. He does : he did appoint so.

Len. The night has been unruly : where we lay,
Our chimneys were blown down : and, as they say,
Lamentings heard i' the air ; strange screams of death,
And prophesying with accents terrible
Of dire combustion and confused events
New hatch'd to the woeful time. The obscure bird
Clamour'd the livelong night : some say the earth
Was feverous and did shake.

Macb. 'T was a rough night.

Len. My young remembrance cannot parallel
A fellow to it.

Re-enter Macduff.

Macd. O horror ! horror ! horror ! Tongue not heart
Cannot conceive nor name thee !

Macb., Len. What's the matter ?

Macd. Confusion now hath made his masterpiece !
Most sacrilegious murder hath broke ope
The Lord's anointed temple, and stole thence
The life o' the building.

Macb. What is 't, you say ? the life ?

Len. Mean you his majesty ?

Macd. Approach the chamber, and destroy your sight
With a new Gorgon : do not bid me speak ;
See, and then speak yourselves.

[*Exeunt* Macbeth *and* Lennox.

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Macb. Good morning to you both.

Macd. Is the king up, my good lord ?

Macb. Not yet.

Macd. He commanded me to call on him early this morning. I almost forgot the hour.

Macb. I will conduct you to him.

Macd. I am afraid I am troubling you, but I know that you do not mind it.

Macb. The labour in which we take delight, makes us forgetful of all troubles. Here is the door to his bed-chamber.

Macd. I will take the liberty of calling him up, for this duty is mine. [*Exit.*

Len. Does the king leave to-day ?

Macb. He does ; so he fixed it up.

Len. Last night was a wild one. Where we slept, our chimneys were blown away ; and it is reported, strange wailing and cries of death were heard in the air ; they seem to predict in too fearful tones serious disorder and other calamities, born to trouble the present time. The owl, which is a bird of darkness, shrieked the whole night. Some say that the earth quaked as in an ague fit.

Macb. It was a violent night.

Len. Young as I am, cannot remember a night like this.

Re-enter Macduff.

Macd. O the horror of it ! Neither the tongue can speak nor the heart conceive what it is !

Macb., Len. What has happened ?

Macd. Destruction has now reached its climax. The most profane hand of the murderer has cut open the person of heaven-anointed king, and taken away his life as unholy hands rob a temple of its sacred treasure.

Macb. What do you say ? The life taken away ?

Len. Do you mean that the king has been done to death ?

Macd. Enter the chamber, and let your eyes be destroyed by seeing a sight as dreadful as Medusa. Do not question me, see for yourselves and then you can talk about it.

[*Exeunt* Macbeth *and* Lennox,

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Awake ! Awake !
Ring the alarum-bell. Murder and treason !
Banquo and Donalbain ! Malcolm ! awake !
Shake off this downy sleep, death's counterfeit,
And look on death itself ! up, up, and see
The great doom's image ! Malcolm ! Banquo !
As from your graves rise up, and walk like sprites,
To countenance this horror ! Ring the bell. [*Bell rings.*

Enter Lady Macbeth.

Lady Macb. What's the business,
That such a hideous trumpet calls to parley
The sleepers of the house ? speak, speak !
Macd. O gentle lady !
'T is not for you to hear what I can speak ;
The repetition in a woman's ear
Would murder as it fell.

Enter Banquo.

O Banquo ! Banquo !
Our royal master's murder'd !
Lady Macb. Woe, alas !
What ! in our house ?
Ban. Too cruel any where.
Dear Duff, I prithee, contradict thyself,
And say it is not so.

Re-enter Macbeth *and* Lennox.

Macb. Had I but died an hour before this chance
I had lived a blessed time ; for, from this instant,
There's nothing serious in mortality,
All is but toys ; renown and grace is dead,
The wine of life is drawn, and the mere lees
Is left this vault to brag of.

Enter Malcolm *and* Donalbain.

Don. What is amiss ?
Macb. You are, and do not know 't :
The spring, the head, the fountain of your blood
Is stopp'd ; the very source of it is stopp'd.
Macd. Your royal father's murder'd.
Mal. O ! by whom ?
Len. Those of his chamber, as it seem 'd, had done 't :
Their hands and faces were all badged with blood ;
So were their daggers, which unwiped we found
Upon their pillows :
They stared, and were distracted ; no man's life
Was to be trusted with them.

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Wake up, wake up you all ! Ring the alarm bells ! Murder and treason have been done ! Banquo and Donalbain ! Malcolm ! Wake up ! Cast off this soft and luxurious sleep, which is but a picture of death, and look on the real image of death itself ! Get up and see the very picture of destruction. Malcolm ! Banquo ! rise as if from your graves, and walk the earth like unlaid ghosts, that you may fit in with this horrible spectacle, ring the bell !

[*Bell rings.*

Enter Lady Macbeth.

Lady Macb. What is the matter that such an impetuous summons rouses the sleepers in the house to a conference ? Tell me what it is !

Macd. O gentle lady, it is not fit for you to hear what I can tell you. If I were to repeat it, it would be to kill a tender woman.

Enter Banquo.

O Banquo, Banquo, our king is murdered !

Lady Macb. Alas, what a thing to be done in our house !

Ban. The murder of the king would have been too cruel anywhere. Dear Duff, I pray you, unsay it. Let me hear that it is not true.

Re-enter Macbeth *and* Lennox.

Macb. If I have died an hour before this calamity, I would have blessed my life ; for henceforth nothing in life can be taken seriously. All is but a shadow ; fame and grace are no more. Life has been drained dry of all joy and all that is left in this world, arched over by the heavens, is nothing but misery.

Enter Malcolm *and* Donalbain.

Don. What is wrong ?

Macb. You are wronged and you do not know it. The source and fountain head of your life's blood flows no more. The very spring of your existence has gone dry.

Macd. Your father, the king has been murdered.

Mal. But by whom ?

Len. His own attendants who slept in his chamber, appear to have done it, for their hands and faces are all stained with blood ; so also were their daggers which we found upon their pillows. They gazed vacantly at us, and were wild. No man could be safe with them.

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Macb. O ! yet I do repent me of my fury,
That I did kill them.

Macd. Wherefore did you so ?

Macb. Who can be wise, amazed, temperate and furious,
Loyal and neutral, in a moment ? No man :
The expedition of my violent love
Outrun the pauser, reason. Here lay Duncan,
His silver skin laced with his golden blood ;
And his gash'd stabs look'd like a breach in nature
For ruin's wasteful entrance : there, the murderers,
Steep'd in the colours of their trade, their daggers
Unmannerly breach'd with gore : who could refrain,
That had a heart to love, and in that heart
Courage to make's love known !

Lady Macb. Help me hence, ho !

Macd. Look to the lady.

Mal. [*Aside to* Don.] Why do we hold our tongues,
That most may claim this argument for ours ?

Don. [*Aside to* Mal.] What should be spoken
Here, where our fate, hid in an auger-hole,
May rush and seize us ? Let's away : our tears
Are not yet brew'd.

Mal. [*Aside to* Don.] Nor our strong sorrow
Upon the foot of motion.

Ban. Look to the Lady :

[*Lady* Macbeth *is carried out.*

And when we have our naked frailties hid,
That suffer in exposure, let us meet,
And question this most bloody piece of work,
To know it further. Fears and scruples shake us :
In the great hand of God I stand, and thence
Against the undivulged pretence I fight
of treasonous malice.

Macb. And so do I.

All. So all.

Macb. Let's briefiy put on manly readiness,
And meet i' the hall together.

All. Well contented.

[*Exeunt all but* Malcolm *and* Donalbain.

Mal. What will you do ? Let's not consort with them :
To show an unfelt sorrow is an office
Which the false man does easy. I'll to England.

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Macb. Yet I regret that in my fury I killed them.

Macd. Why did you kill them ?

Macb. How can you expect one to be wise, when confused, self-restrained, when violent, loyal and impartial at the same moment. My devotion, which is beyond all measure, hurried me into action, and have little time to reason to pause over it. Here lay Duncan, his smooth and tender skin streaked with blood, and his gaping wounds, looked like openings made in the body for death to enter and do its havoc : there lay the murderers, drenched in the blood that they had shed, even their daggers rudely stained with blood. Who could with a heart capable of loving, and possessed of courage to make that love known, restrain himself from acting as I did.

Lady Macb. Help me out of the room, I pray.

Macd. Attend to the lady.

Mal. [*Aside to* Don.] Why do we keep silent, when this concerns us more closely than any one else ?

Don. [*Aside to* Mal.] We could say here nothing where the doom might fall upon us at any moment in the most surreptitious manner. Let us run away from this place. It is not the time for us to shed our tears.

Mal. [*Aside to* Don.] Nor is it time for our grief to set us in action.

Ban. Attend to the lady : [*Lady* Macbeth *is carried out.*] When we have clothed our half naked bodies so that they may not be exposed to the chilly air, let us meet again, and investigate closely into this bloody affair. We are shaken by doubt and fear. I commit myself to God, and depending on God I resolve to fight this design of malicious treason still I track it home.

Macb. So do I resolve.

All. So we all do resolve.

Macb. Let us put on our clothes and be ready for any action. And let us meet in the hall together.

All. Agreed. [*Exeunt all but* Malcolm *and* Donalbain.

Mal. What are you going to do ? Let us not associate with them. To parade the sorrow that is not felt is an easy thing for an insincere man to do. I will go to England.

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Don. To Ireland, I ; our separated fortune
Shall keep us both the safer : where we are,
There's daggers in men's smiles : the near in blood,
The nearer bloody.

Mal. This murderous, shaft that's shot
Hath not yet lighted, and our safest way
Is to avoid the aim : therefore, to horse ;
And let us not be dainty of leave-taking,
But shift away : there's warrant in that theft
Which steals itself where there's no mercy left.

[*Exeunt.*

Scene IV. *Outside the Castle.*

Enter Ross *and an old* Man.

Old Man. Threescore and ten I can remember well ;
Within the volume of which time I have seen
Hours dreadful and things strange, but this sore night
Hath trifled former knowings.

Ross. Ah ! good father,
Thou seest, the heavens, as troubled with man's act,
Threaten his bloody stage : by the clock 't is day,
And yet dark night strangles the travelling lamp,
Is't night's predominance, or the day's shame,
That darkness does the face of earth entomb,
When living light should kiss it ?

Old Man. 'T is unnatural,
Even like the deed that's done. On Tuesday last,
A falcon, towering in her pride of place,
Was by a mousing owl hawk'd at and kill'd.

Ross. And Duncan's horses, a thing most strange and certain,
Beauteous and swift, the minions of their race,
Turn'd wild in nature, broke their stalls, flung out,
Contending 'gainst obedience, as they would make
War with mankind.

Old Man. 'Tis said they eat each other.

Ross. They did so ; to the amazement of mine eyes,
That look'd upon't. Here comes the good Macduff.

Enter Macduff.

How goes the world, sir, now ?

Macd. Why, see you not ?

Ross. Is't known who did this more than bloody deed ?

Macd. Those that Macbeth hath slain.

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Don. I will go to Ireland. It will be safer for us if we live apart. At present where we are, there is treachery in the smiles of men. One who is nearest in kinship, is the most dangerous to us.

Mal. The mischief which has been set on foot with this murder, has not yet run its cycle. The safest thing for us to do is to keep away from it. Therefore, let us mount our horses, and go without the ceremony of leave-taking. There is good excuse for stealing away thus from a place where a cruel fate may await us.

[*Exeunt.*

Scene *IV.* *Outside* Macbeth's *Castle.*

Enter Ross *and an* Old Man.

Old Man. I can remember my experience of seventy years, in course of which I have seen dreadful times and things. But this violent night outstrips all my previous experiences.

Ross. Yes, good old man, you see, heavens, as reacting to the wicked deeds of man, threaten the earth with destruction. Judging by the clock, it is day now, yet the darknsss of night stifles the shooting rays of the sun. I cannot, say whether it is the triumph of night, or the shame of day that darkness still shrouds the face of earth. It should blaze with the light of the sun that gives life to everything on earth.

Old Man. It is monstrous, even like the murder, that has been done. On Tuesday last a falcon, scaring high up into the sky, was hunted to death by an owl that may pursue a mouse.

Ross. And I am going to tell you a most strange and incredible thing, of which there can, however, we little doubt ; Duncan's horses, beautiful and swift, the best specimens of their breed suddenly turned mad, broke away, and ran out, refusing to obey and curb, as if they would fight with men.

Old Man. It is reported that they ate each other up.

Ross. They did so, and I was filled with astonishment when I saw this. Here comes good Macduff.

Enter Macduff.

How is the world getting on, sir ?

Macd. Why, you know, how it is getting on.

Ross. Have the murderers been discovered ? It is the most foul murder that has ever been committed.

Macd. Those whom Macbeth has slain, are said to be the murderers.

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Ross. Alas, the day !
What good could they pretend ?
Macd. They were subor n'd
Malcolm and Donalbain, the king's two sons,
Are stol'n away and fled, which puts upon them
Suspicion of the deed.
Ross. 'Gainst nature still !
Thriftless ambition, that wilt ravin up
Thine own life's means ! Then 't is most like
The sovereignty will fall upon Macbeth.
Macd. He is already named, and gone to Scone
To be invested.
Ross. Where is Duncan's body ?
Macd. Carried to Colmekill,
The sacred storehouse of his predecessors,
And guardian of their bones.
Ross. Will you to Scone ?
Macd. No, cousin, I'll to Fife,
Ross. Well, I will thither.
Macd. Well, may you see things well done there : adieu !
Lest our old robes sit easier than our new !
Ross. Farewell, father.
Old Man. God's benison go with you : and with those
That would make good of bad, and friends of foes !

[*Exeunt.*

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Ross. Alas, what a pity ! What excuse could they have for doing so ?

Macd. They were bribed. Malcolm and Donalbain, the two sons of the king, have left the place in secret, and their flight puts the suspicion of the murder upon them.

Ross. It is monstrous and incredible. O improvident ambition, will you destroy that which keeps you alive ? It is most likely then that the crown will go to Macbeth.

Macd. He has already been nominated, and has gone to Scone to be crowned.

Ross. Where is the body of dead king ?

Macd. It has been carried to Colmekill, that sacred funeral vault of his ancestors, and the custodian of their bones.

Ross. Will you go to Scone ?

Macd. No cousin, I will rather go to Fife.

Ross. I will go to Scone.

Macd. May you find nothing done amiss there. Farewell ! let us hope that it would be easy for us to accommodate overselves to the new order of things.

Ross. Farewell, sir.

Old Man. God's blessing be upon you and upon all who bring good out of evil and turn enemies into friends.

[*Exeunt.*

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ACT III

Scene I. *Forres. A room in the Palace*

Enter Banquo.

Ban. Thou hast it now : king, Cawdor, Glamis all,
As the weird women promised ; and, I fear,
Thou play'dst most foully for't ; yet it was said
It should not stand in thy posterity,
But that myself should be the root and father
Of many kings. If there come truth from them,
As upon thee, Macbeth, their speeches shine,
Why, by the verities on thee made good,
May they not be my oracles as well,
And set me up in hope ? But, hush ! no more,

Sennet sounded. Enter Macbeth, *as king* ;
Lady Macbeth, *as queen* ; Lennox, Ross, Lords, Ladies,
and Attendants.

Macb. Here's our chief guest.
Lady Macb. If he had been forgotten
It had been as a gap in our great feast,
And all-thing unbecoming
Macb. To-night we hold a solemn supper, sir,
And I 'll request your presence.
Ban. Let your highness
Command upon me ; to the which my duties
Are with a most indissoluble tie
For ever knit.
Macb. Ride you this afternoon !
Ban. Ay, my good lord.
Macb. We should have else desired your good advice.
Which still hath been both grave and prosperous,
In this day's council ; but we'll take to-morrow.
Is 't far you ride ?
Ban. As far, my lord, as will fill up the time
'Twixt this and supper ; go not my horse the better,
I must become a borrower of the night
For a dark hour or twain.
Macb. Fail not our feast.
Ban. My lord, I will not.
Macb. We hear our bloody cousins are bestow'd
In England and in Ireland, not confessing
Their cruel parricide, filling their hearers
With strange invention ; but of that to-morrow,
When therewithal we shall have cause of state
Craving us jointly. Hie you to horse ; adieu,
Till you return at night. Goes Fleance with you ?

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ACT III

Scene I. *Forres. The Palace*

Enter Banquo.

Ban. Well, you have got it at last. You were thane of Glamis and then thane of Cawdor and now you are king. All the prophecies of the witches have come true, and I suspect that you were up to the dirtiest trick to achieve your ambition. Yet it was predicted that the crown would pass out of your descendants, and that I myself would be the father of a line of kings. If there is truth in what they predicted—as there is evidence of it in your case, Macbeth—in view of the fulfilment of their prophecies regarding you, may I not expect that they may turn to be as good and unfailing as the voice of the gods, and encourage me to hope ? But silence for the present !

Sennet sounded. Enter Macbeth, *as king,*
Lady Macbeth, *as queen* ; Lennox, Ross, Lords, Ladies *and* Attendants.

Macb. Here is our chief guest.

Lady Macb. If he had been left out, it would have been a great omission which would have spoilt the mirth of our feast.

Macb. Now we shall have a state banquet to-night, sir, and I request you to be present.

Ban. Your majesty may put it as command, which I am bound to carry out by my allegiance, not to be severed till my death.

Macb. Do you go out riding this afternoon ?

Ban. I do, Your Majesty.

Macb. If you do not, I would have asked you to help me with your advice, which I have always found weighty and fruitful of happy results, in our deliberations which are to be held to-day. But to-morrow we can take your advice. Are you going on a long ride ?

Ban. I shall ride as far as can be done in the interval between now and the time of the banquet. If my horse goes slow, I may be late by an hour or two at night.

Macb. But do not miss our feast.

Ban. No, Your Majesty, I will not.

Macb. I hear that our cousins who shed the blood of their father have gone, one to England and the other to Ireland. They have not confessed their crime of having murdered their father ; on the other hand, they are telling their hearers a different story. We shall discuss this matter to-morrow, when the important affairs of the state also demand our attention. You may mount your horse and away, farewell till we meet again at night. Does Fleance accompany you ?

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Ban. Ay, my good lord : our time does call upon 's.

Macb. I wish your horses swift and sure of foot ;
And so I do commend you to their backs.
Farewell. [*Exit* Banquo.
Let every man be master of his time
Till seven at night : to make society
The sweeter welcome, we will keep ourself
Till supper-time alone ; while then, God be with you !

[*Exeunt all but* Macbeth *and an* Attendant.

Sirrah, a word with you. Attend those men
Our pleasure ?

Atten. They are, my lord, without the palace gate.

Macb. Bring them before us. [*Exit* Attendant.

To be thus is nothing.

But to be safely thus. Our fears in Banquo
Stick deep, and in his royalty of nature
Reigns that which would be fear'd : 't is much he dares,
And, to that dauntless temper of his mind,
He hath a wisdom that doth guide his valour
To act in safety. There is none but he
Whose being I do fear ; and under him
My genius is rebuked, as it is said
Mark Antony's was by Caesar. He chid the sisters
When first they put the name of king upon me,
And bade them speak to him ; then, prophet-like,
They hail'd him father to a line of kings.
Upon my head they placed a fruitless crown,
And put a barren sceptre in my gripe,
Thence to be wrench'd with an unlineal hand,
No son of mine succeeding. If 't be so,
For Banquo's issue have I filed my mind ;
For them the gracious Duncan have I murder'd ;
Put rancourse in the vessel of my peace
Only for them ; and mine eternal jewel
Given to the common enemy of man,
To make them kings, the seed of Banquo kings !
Rather than so, come fate into the list,
And champion me to the utterance ! Who's there ?

Re-enter Attendant, *with two* Murderers.

Now go to the door, and stay there till we call.

[*Exit* Attendant.

Was it not yesterday we spoke together ?

First Mur. It was so please your highness.

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Ban. Yes, Your Majesty. It is time we started.

Macb. I wish that your horses may be swift and sure-footed, and let me hope they will carry you safe. Farewell. [*Exit* Banquo.] Let everyone dispose of his time as he pleases till seven at night. I should like to be left to myself so that I may enjoy the company better at the banquet. Till then goodbye to you. [*Exeunt all but* Macbeth, *and an* Attendant.] Fellow, let me have a word with you. Are those men waiting to see me ?

Atten. They are, Your Majesty, waiting outside the gate.

Macb. Bring them in. [*Exit* Attendant.

To be king is not worth while, if I am not safe when I am a king. I cannot cast of the fears of Banquo ; they are deep rooted in my mind. He possesses such royal dignity as inspires awe. He can attempt much and with his fearless spirit he unites a wisdom that directs his courage to act in safety. There is none whose existence I fear so much as his. By his side my genius seems to be put to shame ; as, I hear, Mark Antony's genius was put to shame by Caesar. He scolded the witches when they first prophesied that I should be the king, and charged them to speak to him. Then with their gift of prophecy they welcomed him as father of a line of kings The crown which they predicted for me, was not to remain mine ; and it is a vain sceptre that I hold in my hand ; it is soon to be snatched away from me by a hand, which is none of my lineage. If it is to be so, then I have defiled my mind for the benefit of Banquo's children. For their sake have I murdered the kind-hearted Duncan, poisoning the peace of my own mind, and committed my immortal soul, which is my dearest possession to the devil. It is all for the benefit of the children of Banquo who are to be kings after me. Rather than let this happen I should dare let to a deadly combat and reck nothing of the result. Who is there ?

Re-enter Attendant *with two* Murderers.

Now you may guard the door, and wait there till I summon you. [*Exit* Attendant.

Was is not yesterday that we spoke together ?

First Mur. Yes, if it may please Your Majesty.

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Macb. Well then, now

Have you consider'd of my speeches ? Know
That it was he in the times past which held you
So under fortune, which you thought had been
Our innocent self. This I made good to you
In our last conference, pass'd in probation with you,
How you were borne in hand, how cross'd, the instruments,
Who wrought with them, and all things else that might
To half a soul and to a notion crazed
Say 'Thus did Banquo.'

First Mur. You made it known to us.

Macb. I did so ; and went further, which is now
Our point of second meeting. Do you find
Your patience so predominant in your nature
That you can let this go ? Are you so gospell'd
To pray for this good man and for his issue,
Whose heavy hand hath bow'd you to the grave
And beggar'd yours for ever ?

First Mur. We are men, my liege.

Macb. Ay in the catalogue ye go for men ;
As hounds and greyhounds, mongrels, spaniels, curs,
Shoughs, water-rugs, and demi-wolves, are clept
All by the name of dogs : the valued file
Distinguishes the swift, the slow, the subtle,
The housekeeper, the hunter, every one
According to the gift which bounteous nature
Hath in him closed ; whereby he does receive
Particular addition, from the bill
That writes them all alike : and so of men.
Now, if you have a station in the file,
Not i' the worst rank of manhood, say it ;
And I will put that business in your bosoms,
Whose execution takes yonr enemy off,
Grapples you to the heart and love of us,
Who wear our health but sickly in his life,
Which in his death were perfect.

Second Mur. I am one, my liege,

Whom the vile blows and buffets of the world
Have so incensed that I am reckless what
I do to spite the world.

First Mur. And I another

So weary with disasters, tugg'd with fortune,
That I would set my life on any chance,
To mend it or be rid on 't.

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Macb. Let me now ask you whether you have thought over my proposal. Bear in mind that it was he who kept you under in the past, when you thought that it was myself who got you into trouble. In our last conversation I gave you good proof of in—I pointed out to you how you were kept in false hopes which never bore fruit : what were the means that were adopted, and who were the agents that adopted those means to keep you under. I explained all things to you, and they might have convinced even a half-witted and crazy fellow that it was none but Banquo who did all this.

First Mur. You let us know of all this.

Macb. I did so, and proceeded further ; and so we come to the subject of to-day's talk. Do you find that your patience is so strong a point with you that you will not mind this ? Have you been so taught by scripture that you would rather pray for this good man and for his children, whose oppression crushed you down, brought you to the verge of death, and impoverished you for ever ?

First Mur. Your Majesty may remember that we are after all men.

Macb. You do indeed pass for men, as there are different varieties of dogs,—hounds, grayhounds, mongrels, spaniels, curs, shaggy-haired dogs, rough-haired water dogs, dogs that seem to resemble wolves, and they all lumped together as dogs. But a discriminating catalogue enumerating their respective qualities and attributes, distinguishes them a swift, or slow or crafty, or as 'a good housekeeper, a good hunter'—in fact everyone is differentiated according to the attribute which bountiful nature has given him, and by which he receives a particular title. Such a discriminating catalogue is different from the one, which classes them all as dogs. And this is as true of men. Now if you have a distinctive place to earn in the catalogue, and do not belong to the worst grade of mankind, say so ; and I will entrust to you that business, the carrying out of which not only remove your enemy, but endear you to me, and bind you fast to my affection, for we cannot breathe in peace, and live but in perpetual sickness so long as he is alive. Our life is a maimed one until he is dead.

Second Mur. I am one, Your Majesty, whom the rough usages of the world have so embittered that I do not care what I may do to retaliate upon the world.

First Mur. And I am another so sick of the ills of life, and so tossed about by fortune that I am ready to take any risk either to improve the chances of my life or to get rid of it.

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Macb. Both of you
Know Banquo was your enemy.
Second Mur. True, my lord.

Macb. So is he mine ; and in such bloody distance

That every minute of his being thrusts
Against my near'st of life : and though I could
With bare-faced power sweep him from my sight
And bid my will avouch it, yet I must not,
For certain friends that are both his and mine,
Whose loves I may not drop, but wail his fall
Who I myself struck down ; and thence it is
That I to your assistance do make love,
Masking the business from the common eye
For sundry weighty reasons.

Second Mur. We shall my lord,

Perform what you command us.
First Mur. Though our lives—
Macb. Your spirits shine through you. Within this hour at most,
I will advise you where to plant yourselves,
Acquaint you with the perfect spy o' the time,
The moment on't ; for 't must be done to-night,
And something from the palace ; always thought
That I require a clearness ; and with him,
To leave no rubs nor botches in the work,
Fleance his son, that keeps him company,
Whose absence is no less material to me
Than is his father's, must embrace the fate
Of that dark hour. Resolve yourselves apart ;
I'll come to you anon.
Second Mur. We are resolved, my lord.
Macb. I' ll call upon you straight ? abide within. [*Exeunt* Murderers.
It is concluded : Banquo, thy soul's flight,
If it find heaven, must find it out to-night. [*Exit.*

Scene II. *The Same. Another Room in the palace.*

Enter Lady Macbeth *and* a Servant.

Lady Macb. Is Banquo gone from court ?
Serv. Ay, madam, but returns again to-night.
Lady Macb. Say to the king, I would attend his leisure
For a few words.
Serv. Madam, I will. [*Exit.*

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Macb. Both of you know that Banquo was your enemy.

Both Mur. Yes, Your Majesty.

Macb. He is my enemy too, and he stands so close to me and he bears me such deadly enmity, that every minute of his existence threatens mine. Though I could have got rid of him by the exercise of my royal authority, and boldly avow that it was my sovereign will, yet I must not do it, in consideration of common friends, whose goodwill and friendship I cannot do without. In such a case I shall have to regret his death though I myself struck him down. Because of these considerations, I solicit your assistance having to keep the matter a secret for several important reasons.

Second Mur. We shall, Your Majesty, carry out your order.

First Mur. Though our own lives may be in danger.

Macb. Your fiery spirits are manifested in your words and eyes. Within an hour at the latest, I shall let you know where you should lie in ambush and the exact moment when you shall strike, for the deed must be done to-night, and at some distance from the palace. It should always be kept in mind that no suspicion should fall on me. And in order that your work may be thorough without any mess, let his son, Fleance, who accompanies him, be killed with him. It is as important that he should be put out of the way as his father. The same fate must be dealt out to them in the darkness of night. Withdraw and make up your minds. I shall see you again.

Both Mur. We have already made up our minds, Your majesty.

Macb. I shall soon send you, stay within.

[*Exeunt Murderers.*

It is settled. Banquo, if your soul is destined to go to heaven it will go there to-night.

Scene II. The Palace.

Enter Lady Macbeth *and* a Servant.

Lady Macb. Has Banquo left ?

Serv. Yes, madam. But he is coming back this evening.

Lady Macb. Go and inform the king that I should like to speak to him when he is at leisure.

Serv. Madam, I will. [*Exit.*

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Lady Macb. Nought's had, all's spent,
Where our desire is got without content :
'T is safer to be that which we destroy
Than by destruction dwell in doubtful joy.

Enter Macbeth.

How now, my lord ! why do you keep alone,
Of sorriest fancies your companions making,
Using those thoughts which should indeed have died
With them they think on ? Things without all remedy
Should be without regard : what's done is done.

Macb. We have scotch'd the snake, not kill'd it :
She'll close and be hereself, whilst our poor malice
Remains in danger of her former tooth.
But let the frame of things disjoint, both the worlds suffer,
Ere we will eat our meal in fear, and sleep
In the affliction of these terrible dreams
That shake us nightly. Better be with the dead,
Whom we, to gain our peace, have sent to peace,
Than on the torture of the mind to lie
In restless ecstasy. Duncan is in his grave ;
After life's fitful fever he sleeps well ;
Treason has done his worst : nor steel, nor poison,
Malice domestic, foreign levy, nothing
Can touch him further !

Lady Macb. Come on ;
Gentle my lord, sleek o'er your rugged looks ;
Be bright and jovial among your guests to-night.

Macb. So shall, I, love ; and so, I pray, be you.
Let your remembrance apply to Banquo ;
Present him eminence, both with eye and tongue :
Unsafe the while, that we
Must lave our honours in thse flattering streams,
And make our faces vizards to our hearts,
Disguising what they are.

Lady Macb. You must leave this.

Macb. O ! full of scorpions is my mind, dear wife ;
Thou know'st that Banquo and his Fleance lives.

Lady Macb. But in them nature's copy's not eterne.

Macb. There's comfort yet ; they are assailable ;
Then be thou jocund. Ere the bat hath flown
His cloister'd flight, ere to black Hecate's summons
The shard-borne beetle with his drowsy hums
Hath rung night's yawning peal, there shall be done
A deed of dreadful note.

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Lady Macb. We have gained nothing, but also everything when we have attained our object but no peace of mind. If by killing we were to live in a state of such suspense, it would have been better for us to have been killed.

Enter Macbeth.

What is the matter, my lord ? Why do you keep by yourself ; brooding on unhappy thoughts, still nursing those memories which should have perished with those with whom they are concerned. The ill that cannot be cured, must be endured, what is done cannot be undone.

Macb, We have just hurt the snake, not killed it. The snake will soon recover herself, and we stand in danger of her tooth. But I would rather have the whole framework of the universe smashed, both heaven and earth laid waste than live in perpetual terror, denied even peaceful meals, and ever hunted by nightmares that shake our sleep. It is better to share the fate of those we have killed ; we have given them peace, and earned for ourselves perpetual torment and feverish unrest. Duncan sleeps in his grave ; it is a peaceful sleep after the fret and fever of life on earth. Treachery can do him no harm any more. He need fear no more the assassin's dagger of his poison the is beyond the reach of civil strife and foreign wars. Nothing can ever break in upon his peaceful sleep.

Lady Macb. Be quite, my dear husband compose your wild looks ; be merry and gay as you move among your guests to-night.

Macb. So shall I be, my love ; and so may you be, please. Show particular attention to Banquo ; both by words and looks let him be impressed that you hold him in high esteem. We are far from safe, so long as we have to maintain our high position by flattering others, and wear a mask, disguising our real feelings.

Lady Macb. You must not think of this.

Macb. My mind is full of torment and unrest, beloved. You know that Banquo and his son are yet alive.

Lady Macb. But you know that nature will not keep them perpetually alive. They must die some day.

Macb. There is some comfort in that ; they are not proof against death. Then you can be certainly merry. Before the bat has flown to-night round the cloisters and the beetle, borne on its scaly wings, has, with its drone, heralded the sleepy spell of night, in answer to the summons of Hecate, there shall be done a dreadful deed, notorious enough.

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Lady Macb. What's to be done ?
Macb. Be innocent of the knowledge, dearest chuck,
Till thou applaud the deed. Come, seeling night,
Scarf up the tender eye of pitiful day,
And with thy bloody and invisible hand
Cancel and tear to pieces that great bond
Which keeps me pale ! Light thickens, and the crow
Makes wing to the rocky wood ;
Good things of day begin to droop and drowse,
Whiles night's black agents to their preys do rouse.
Thou marvell'st at my words : but hold thee still ;
Things bad begun make strong themselves by ill :
So, prithee, go with me.
[*Exeunt.*

Scene III. The Same. A Park, near the Palace.

Enter three Murderers.

First Mur. But who did bid thee join with us ?
Third Mur. Macbeth.
Second Mur. He needs not our mistrust, since he delivers
Our offices and what we have to do
To the direction just.
First Mur. Then stand with us.
The west yet glimmers with some streaks of day :
Now spurs the lated traveller apace
To gain the timely inn : and near approaches
The subject of our watch.
Third Mur. Hark ! I hear horses.
Ban. [*Within.*] Gives us a light there, ho !
Second Mur. Then it is he : the rest
That are within the note of expectation
Already are i' the court.
First Mur. His horses go about.
Third Mur. Almost a mile ; but he does usually,
So all men do, from hence to the palace gate
Make it their walk.
Second Mur. A light, a light !
Enter Banquo, *and* Fleance *with a torch.*
Third Mur. 'T is he.
First Mur. Stand to 't.
Ban. It will be rain to-night.
First Mur. Let it come down.
[*They set upon* Banquo.

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Lady Macb. What is to be done ?

Macb. I should rather keep it from your knowledge, darling, till it is done, when you have the occasion to praise it. Let night come, and blind the affectionate eye of compassionate day ; and let night with her unseen and murderous hand raze out and annul that lease of life, granted to Banquo and his son, which keeps me in perpetual terror. Darkness close in, and the crows retire to their nests in the rook-haunted trees. The good and beneficent influences of day are losing their power, while influences that are active at night are prevailing. You must be amazed at what I say ; but hold yourself in patience for a while. Things that have a bad beginning, must strengthen themselves by going still worse. So please come with me.

Scene III. A Park, near the Palace.

Enter three Murderers.

First Mur. But who asked you to join with us ?

Third Mur. Macbeth.

Second Mur. We need not distrust him, since he reports the task in our hands with all the details of execution.

First Mur. All right, you can stay with us. There is some faint glow of light in the western sky. Now the belated traveller rides fast to reach the shelter of an inn before it gets dark, and the man for whom we are waiting must be drawing near too.

Third Mur. Listen ! I hear the tramping of horses.

Ban [*Within.*] Let us have a light there, please.

Second Mur. So it is Banquo. The rest of the party who are invited and expected to attend the banquet, have already arrived at the palace.

First Mur. His horses are being sent round by the longer way.

Third Mur. They will have to traverse about a mile. But Banquo generally goes on foot from here to the palace as all men do.

Second Mur. Look, there is a light !

Enter Banquo *and* Fleance *with a torch.*

Third Mur. It is he.

First Mur. Let us make a stand.

Ban. It is going to rain to-night.

First Mur. Let this rain come down on you.

[*They set upon* Banquo.

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Ban. O, treachery ! Fly, good Fleance, fly, fly, fly !
Thou may'st revenge. O slave ! [*Dies.* Fleance *escapes.*

Third Mur. Who did strike out the light ?

First Mur. Was't not the way ?

Third Mur. There's but one down ; the son is fled.

Second Mur. We have lost
Best half of our affair.

First Mur. Well, let's away, and say how much is done.
[*Exeunt.*

Scene IV. The Same. A Room of State in the Palace.

A Banquet prepared. Enter Macbeth, Lady Macbeth, Ross, Lennox, Lords, *and* Attendants.

Macb. You know your own degrees, sit down : at first and last
The hearty welcome.

Lords. Thanks to your majesty.

Macb. Ourself will mingle with society
And play the humble host.
Our hostess keeps her state, but in best time
We will require her welcome.

Lady Macb. Pronounce it for me, sir, to all our friends ;
For my heart speaks they are welcome.

Enter First Murderer, *at the door.*

Macb. See, they encounter thee with their hearts' thanks.
Both sides are even : here I'll sit i' the midst :
Be large in mirth ; anon we'll drink a measure
The table round. [*Approaching the door.*
There's blood upon thy face.

Mur. 'T is Banquo's, then.

Macb. 'T is better thee without than he within.
Is he dispatch'd ?

Mur. My lord, his throat is cut ; that I did for him.

Macb. Thou art the best o' the cut-throats ; yet he's good
That did the like for Fleance : if thou didst it,
Thou art the nonpareil.

Mur. Most royal sir,
Fleance is 'scaped.

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Ban. Oh, there is treason ! Run away, good Fleance, run away ; You may avenge my death. O villain !

[*Dies.* Fleance *escapes.*

Third Mur. Who extinguished the light ?

First Mur. Was it not the right thing to do ?

Third Mur. We have been able to kill one ; the son has run away.

Second Mur. The best part of our work is left undone.

First Mur. Well, let us go and report how far we have succeeded. [*Exeunt.*

Scene IV. The Same. Hall in the Palace.

A Banquet prepared. Enter Macbeth, Lady Macbeth, Ross, Lennox, Lords, *and* Attendants.

Macb. You know your places at the table, sit down ; and let me bid you welcome once for all.

Lords. We think Your Majesty.

Macb. I will freely go about among you and play the part of the host with due humility. There sits our hostess in her chair of state. But when she is ready, we shall expect her to welcome us all.

Lady Macb. Give welcome on my behalf, my lord, to all our friends. I greet them from the bottom of my heart.

First Murderer *appears at the door.*

Macb. They return your good wishes most heartily. I see both sides of the table have been evenly filled. Here I will sit in the middle. Freely enjoy yourselves ; I will presently drink the health of you all, seated round the table. [*Approaching the door.* Your face is stained with blood.

Mur. My face must have been stained then with the blood of Banquo.

Macb. It is better that I should have your standing outside the hall then I should have Banquo inside. Have you finished him ?

Mur. My lord I cut his throat ; there is no mistake about that.

Macb. There is none like you in the business of cutting throat. Yet he is no less good who did the same to Fleance. If you did that too, you are above all comparison.

Mur. Your Majesty, Fleance has escaped.

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Macb. Then comes my fit again : I had else been perfect ;
Whole as the marble, founded as the rock,
As broad and general as the casing air .
But now I am cabin'd, cribb'd, confined, bound in
To saucy doubts and fears. But Banquo's safe ?

Mur. Ay, my good lord : safe in a ditch he bides,
With twenty trenched gashes on his head ;
The least a death to nature.

Macb. Thanks for that.
There the grown serpent lies : the worm that's fled
Hath nature that in time will venom breed,
No teeth for the present. Get thee gone ; to-morrow
We'll hear ourselves, again. [*Exit* Murderer.

Lady Macb. My royal lord,
You do not give the cheer : the feast is sold
That is not often vouch'd, while 'tis a-making,
'T is given with welcome : to feed were best at home ;
From thence, the sauce to meat is ceremony ;
Meeting were bare without it.

Macb. Sweet remembrancer !
Now good digestion wait on appetite,
And health on both !

Len. May 't please your highness sit.
[*The* Ghost *of* Banquo *enters, and sits in* Macbeth's *place.*]

Macb. Here had we now our country's honour roof'd,
Were the graced person of our Banquo present ;
Who may I rather challenge for unkindness
Than pity for mischance !

Ross. His absence, sir,
Lays blame upon his promise. Please't your highness
To grace us with your royal company.

Macb. The table's full.

Len. Here is a place reserved, sir.

Macb. Where ?

Len. Here, my good lord. What, is't that moves your highness ?

Macb. Which of you have done this ?

Lords. What, my good lord ?

Macb. Thou canst not say I did it : never shake
Thy gory locks at me.

Ross. Gentlemen, rise ; his highness is not well.

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Macb. [*Aside.*] Then I am thrown into the shivering fit again. If Fleance had been killed, there would have been nothing wanting to make me happy and give me peace of mind ; I would have been as sound as the marble, as firmly established as a rock, and in spirit as free and genial as the air about us. But now, my life is hedged in and preyed upon by doubts and fears which I cannot lay at rest, and I am hampered at every step. But you are quite sure that Banquo has been got rid of ?

Mur. Yes, your Majesty. He is safe lying in a ditch with twenty gaping wounds on his head, the least of which would have been enough to kill a mortal.

Macb. I thank you for your service. [*Aside.*] The old viper lies there in the ditch : the young serpent that is fled, has no fang at present, but has that nature which will fill it with poison in course of time.—You may depart now. Tomorrow we shall have a talk again. [*Exit* Murderer.

Lady Macb. My lord, you do not welcome your guests. When there is no welcome, the feast is no better than a meal paid for at an eating house. One might as well feed at home. But when dining out, one can enjoy the feast if it is accompanied by cordial ceremony of welcome. Without it, there is no meaning in a banquet.

Macb. Dearest love, I thank you for your reminder. May we have good appetite, and may we enjoy our feast !

Len. May it please Your Majesty to take your seat ?

[*The Ghost of Banquo enters, and sits in* Macbeth's *place.*]

Macb. Here under my roof have I the noblest company in all Scotland, except that Banquo is not here. Let me hope that I may have to tax unkindness and not to pity him for any accident that may have happened !

Ross. He is to be blamed for his absence, because he promised to come. May it please Your Majesty to honour us with your gracious company.

Macb. The table is full.

Len. Here is a seat kept for you, sir.

Macb. Where ?

Len. Here, my lord. What is it that so upsets Your Majesty ?

Macb. Which of you have played this trick ?

Lords. What do you mean, Your Majesty ?

Macb. You cannot say that I have anything to do with it. Do not shake your locks of hair, smirched with blood, at me.

Ross. Gentlemen, rise ; His Majesty is ill.

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Lady Macb. Sit, worthy friends : my lord is often thus,
And hath been from his youth : pray you, keep seat ;
The fit is momentary : upon a thought
He will again be well. It much you note him
You shall offend him and extend his passion :
Feed and regard him not. Are you a man ?

Macb. Ay, and a bold one, that dare look on that
Which might appal the devil.

Lady Macb. O proper stuff !
This is the very painting of your fear ;
This is the air-drawn dagger which, you said,
Let you to Duncan. O ! these flaws and starts,
Imposters to true fear, would well become
A woman's story at a winter's fire,
Authorized by her grandam. Shame itself !
Why do you make such faces ? When all's done
You look but on a stool.

Macb. Prithee, see there ! behold look ! lo ! how say you ?
Why, what care I ? If thou canst nod, speak too.
If charnel-houses and our graves must send
Those that we bury back, our monuments
Shall be the maws of kites. [*Ghost vanishes.*

Lady Macb. What ! quite unmann'd in folly ?

Macb. If I stand here, I saw him.

Lady Macb. Fie, for shame !

Macb. Blood hath been shed ere now, i' the olden time,
Ere human stature purged the gentle weal ;
Ay, and since too, murders have been perform'd
Too terrible for the ear : the time has been,
That when the brains were out, the man would die,
And there an end ; but now they rise again,
With twenty mortal murders on their crowns,
And push us from our stools : this is more strange
Than such a murder is.

Lady Macb. My worthy lord,
Your noble friends do lack you.

Macb. I do forget.
Do not muse at me, my most worthy friends ;
I have a strange infirmity, which is nothing
To those that know me. Come, love and health to all ;
Then, I'll sit down. Give me some wine ; fill full :
I drink to the general joy o' the whole table,
And to our dear friend Banquo, whom we miss ;
Would he were here ! to all, and him, we thirst,
And all to all.

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Lady Macb. Keep seated, gentlemen : my husband is subject to such fits since his youth. The fit will soon pass away. In a moment he will be all right . If you observe him closely, he will aggravate it ; just proceed with the banquet and pay no attention to him. Are you a man ?

Macb. Yes, and not a coward, since I had the courage to look on that sight which might terrify the devil himself.

Lady Macb. Silly, nonsense ! It is nothing but an illusion, called up by your fear, something like the dagger which you saw painted in the air, and which you said directed your steps towards Duncan's room. O, these sudden fits, which seem to mimic fear, would be proper story for a woman to narrate by the fireside in winter—a story handed down to her by her grandmother. You ought to be ashamed to yourself. Why, are there such twitchings on your face ? After all you are gazing at a wooden stool.

Macb. Just look there ! Behold ! What do you say to that ? But I do not care for your noddings. If you cannot, why cannot you speak ? If the dead that have been safely buried in the grave, should come back to earth like this, we should better leave them unburied henceforth ; so that they may be devoured by carrion birds. [*Ghost vanishes.*

Lady Macb. You are quite unnerved by your foolish thoughts !

Macb. As sure as I stand here, I saw him.

Lady Macb. You ought to be ashamed of yourself.

Macb. Murder has been done before this, even in the past before laws were made by men to restrain the crime. Since then murders have been done, too ghastly for the human ear. Time was when the brains were dashed out, the man ceased to live, and there was no more of him ; but now a man dead may rise again, with all the gaping wounds on his head, and dislodge us from our seats. The murder itself is not so strange as this resurrection of the murdered man.

Lady Macb. My dear husband, your noble friends miss your company.

Macb. I have forgotten. Do not think strangely of my conduct, my kind friends. I am subject to a strange illness, which those who know me do not take any serious notice of. Come, I will drink to your love and health, and then I will sit down. Let me have some wine ; fill the cup to the full. Happiness to each one round the table here and to our dear friend Banquo, who is absent. I wish he were here. I drink good health to you all—to you and Banquo.

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Lords. Our duties, and the pledge.
Re-enter Ghost.

Macb. Avaunt ! and quit my sight ! Let the earth hide thee !
Thy bones are marrowless, the blood is cold ;
Thou hast no speculation in those eyes
Which thou dost glare with !

Lady Macb. Think of this, good peers,
But as a thing of custom : 't is no other ;
Only it spoils the pleasure of the time.

Macb. What man dare, I dare :
Approach thou like the rugged Russian bear,
The arm'd rhinoceros, or the Hyrcan tiger;
Take any shape but that, and my firm nerves
Shall never tremble : or be alive again,
And dare me to the desert with thy sword ;
If trembling I inhabit then, protest me
The baby of a girl. Hence, horrible shadow !
Unreal mockery, hence ! [*Ghost vanishes.*
Why so ; being gone,
I am a man again. Pray you, sit still.

Lady Macb. You have displaced the mirth, broke the good meeting,
With most admired disorder.

Macb. Can such things be,
And overcome us like summer's cloud,
Without our special wonder ? You make me strange
Even to the disposition that I owe,
When now I think you can behold such sights,
And keep the natural ruby of your cheeks,
When mine is blanch'd with fear.

Ross. What sights' my lord ?

Laby Macb. I pray you, speak not ; he grows worse and worse ;
Question enrages him. At once, good night :
Stand not upon the order of your going,
But go at once.

Len. Good night ; and better health
Attend his majesty !

Lady Macb. A kind good night to all !

[*Exeunt* Lords *and* Attendants.

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Lords. We offer our service to your Majesty, and drink your health.

Re-enter Ghost.

Macb. Be gone, and do not tyrannize my eye. Let the earth cover you up. Your bones are without flesh, your blood is no more warm, you have no vision in those eyes, which stare at me with a glassy look.

Lady Macb. Good friends, do not take any serious notice of it ; just think of it as something usual with him. Otherwise it spoils our enjoyment at the present moment.

Macb. I have the courage to meet all the perils that may beset a man. You may approach here like fierce Russian bear, the horned rhinoceros, or the tiger infesting the south-western district of the Caspian. You map take any shape except that one, and I can face you without a tremor. Or reassume your life and challenge me and summon one to a lonely place, with your sword. If I show any sign of trembling, then declare me as the doll of a girl. Be gone, horrible apparition ; shadowy illusion, be gone ! [*Ghost vanishes.*] Now it is gone, I am myself again. Please be seated.

Lady Macb. You have spoilt the pleasure of the evening, broken up the party in confusion. which excites one's wonder.

Macb. I wonder how such things can happen, and assail us suddenly like a summer cloud, without awakening our amazement. You make me feel like a stranger to my native disposition, when now that I think you can look upon such spectacles and yet keep the natural bloom of your cheek, whereas mine turns pale with fear.

Ross. What sights do you mean my lord ?

Lady Macb. Please do not speak ; he is getting worse and worse . If you ask him anything, you will excite him more. Good night to you all ; you need not stand on ceremony of leave-taking, but please disperse at one.

Len. Good night ; and we wish that His Majesty may soon recover.

Lady Macb. I bid you most affectionate good night to you all. [*Exeunt all but and* Macbeth Lady Macbeth.

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Macb. It will have blood, they say ; blood will have blood :
Stones have been known to move and trees to speak ;
Augurs and understood relations have
By magot-pies and choughs and rooks brought forth
The secret'st man of blood. What is the night ?

Lady Macb. Almost at odds with morning, which is which.

Macb. How say'st thou, that Macduff denies his person
At our great bidding ?

Lady Macb. Did you send to him, sir ?

Macb. I hear it by the way ; but I will send.
There's not a one of them but in his house
I keep a servant fee'd. I will to-morrow,
And betimes I will, to the weird sisters :
More shall they speak, for now I am bent to know,
By the worst means, the worst. For mine own good
All causes shall give way : I am in blood
Stepp'd in so far, that, should I wade no more,
Returning were as tedious as go o' er.
Strange things I have in head that will to hand,
Which must be acted ere they may be scann'd.

Lady Macb. You lack the season of all natures, sleep.

Macb. Come, we'll to sleep. My strange and self-abuse
Is the initate fear that wants hard use :
We are yet but young in deed. [*Exeunt.*

Scene V. A Heath.

Thunder. Enter the three Witches, *meeting* Hecate.

First Witch. Why, how now Hecate ! you look angerly.

Hec. Have I not reason, beldams as you are,
Saucy and overbold ? How did you dare
To trade and traffic with Macbeth
In riddles and affairs of death ;
And I, the mistress of your charms,
The close contriver of all harms,
Was never call'd to bear my part,
Or show the glory of our art ?
And, which is worse, all you have done
Hath been but for a wayyward son,
Spiteful and wrathful ; who, as others do,
Loves for his own ends, not for you.
But make amends now : get you gone,
And at the pit of Acheron

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Macb. It cries for blood ; they say that blood must be avenged by blood. Stones have been known to become animated, and trees to be vocal ; omens and secret affinities between things have revealed the murderer, who kept his crime a secret through the agency of magpies, crows and rooks. What time of night is it ?

Lady Macb. It is very near dawn and it is difficult to say whether it is night or morning.

Macb. Macduff refused to attend to our feast. What do you think of it ?

Lady Macb. Did you send for him, my lord ?

Macb. I heard incidentally that he refused to come ; but I will send for him. There is none in whose house I do not keep a spy in my pay. To-morrow early in the morning I will visit the witches. They must reveal more. For now I am resolved to know the worst even by the worst means. Everything must give way to my own interest. I have gone so far in bloody crime that it would be impossible to retrace my steps, if I had a mind to do so. I have strange schemes in contemplation ; these must be executed before they may be thoroughtly examined.

Lady Macb. You need sleep, the chief nourisher of all living-beings.

Macb. Well, let us go to bed. My fits of waywardness are due to the fact that I am still a novice in crime, and need to be hardened by use. [*Exeunt.*

Scene V. A Heath.

Thunder. Enter the three Witches, *meeting* Hecate.

First Witch. Why, what is wrong, Hecate ? You have an angry look.

Hec. Have you not given me good cause, old hags as you are, impudent and venturing ? How did you dare to have dealings with Macbeth in dark savings and matters of death ? You owe all your spells and your power of evil to me ; yet you never invited me to take part in the proceedings, and display all the glory of my enchantment. What is still worse is that you have done this for a fellow who is impulsive, malicious and passionate, who, like others, is utterly selfish. But there is time yet to make amends. Go and meet me in the morning at the pit of Acheron.

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Meet me i' the morning : thither he
Will come to know his destiny :
Your vessels and your spells provide,
Your charms and every thing beside.
I am for the air ; this night I'll spend
Unto a dismal and a fatal end :
Great business must be wrought ere noon :
Upon the corner of the moon
There hangs a vaporous drop profound :
I'll catch it ere it come to ground :
And that distill'd by magic sleights
Shall raise such artifical spirites
As by the strength of their illusion
Shall drew him on to his confusion :
He shall spurn fate, scorn death, and bear
His hopes 'bove wisdom, grace, and fear ;
And you all know security
Is mortals' chiefest enemy.

[*Music and a song within, "Come away, come away," &c.*

Hark ! I am call'd ; my little spirit, see,
Sits in a foggy cloud, and stays for me. [*Exit.*

First Witch. Come, let' s make haste ; she'll soon be back again. [*Exeunt.*

Scene VI. Forres. A Room in the Palace.

Enter Lennox *and another* Lord.

Len. My former speeches have but hit your thoughts,
Which can interpret further : only, I say,
Things have been strangely borne. The gracious Duncan
Was pitied of Macbeth : marry, he was dead :
And the right-valiant Banquo walk'd too late ;
Whom, you may say, if 't please you, Fleance kill'd,
For Fleance fled : men must not walk too late.
Who cannot want the thought how monstrous
It was for Malcolm and for Donalbain
To kill their gracious father ? damned fact !
How did it grieve Macbeth ! did he not straight
In pious rage the two delinquents tear,
That were the slaves of drink and thralls of sleep ;
Was not that nobly done ? Ay, and wisely too ;
For 't would have anger'd any heart alive
To hear the men deny 't. So that, I say,
He has borne all things well ; and I do think

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He will come there to know what is in store for him. Make ready your vessels and your enchantments and everything else. I am now going for a flight through the air. This night will I spend to a dreadful and calamitous purpose. Before midday great things must be done. A vapoury drop which can be used for enchantment hangs upon the corner of the moon, I will catch it before it drops down to the earth. This being extracted and wrought upon by magic spells, will conjure up such spirits, created by our art, that by the force of the illusion they create, they shall entice him to his own destruction. He wiil defy fate, despise death, and carry his hopes beyond the limits of discretion, caring little for divine favour or rational fear of evil. You all know that a sense of safety is the greatest enemy of mankind.

[*Music and a song within*, "Come away, come away, &c."

Listen, I am summoned : look there, my attendant spirit sits in a foggy cloud and waits me. [*Exit.*

First Witch. Well, let us waste no time ; she will soon be back again. [*Exeunt.*

Scene VI. Forres. The Palace.

Enter Lennox *and another* Lord.

Len. What I hinted to you last time, touches on what has been passing in your mind, and it is for you to draw out its hidden meaning. What I mean to say is that things have been managed in a suspicious manner. Macbeth took pity upon the kind-hearted Duncan, and he is no more. And brave Banquo walked too late at night; and if you like you may say that his son, Fleance, killed him, because Fleance had fled ; so it follows that men must not be out late at night. None can be so wanting in sense as not to think how unnatural it was for Malcolm and Donalbain to kill their affectionate father. It was a most notorious fact. And how deeply Did Macbeth take it to heart ! Did he not at once in noble indignation slay the two attendants, who under the influence of drink and sleep had neglected their charge ? Must we not admit that it was graciously done ? And yes, let us say, wisely too. For it would have displeased any living body to hear the attendants deny the charge of murder. So let us say that he has managed the whole show very cleverly. It is my conviction

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That had he Duncan's sons under his key,
As, an't please heaven, he shall not, they should find
What 't were to kill a father ; so should Fleance.
But, peace ! for from broad words, and 'cause he fail'd
His presence at the tyrant's feast, I hear
Macduff lives in disgrace. Sir, can you tell
Where he bestows himself ?

Lord. The son of Duncan,
From whom this tyrant holds the due of birth,
Lives in the English court, and is received
Of the most pious Edward with such grace
That the malevolence of fortune nothing
Takes from his high respect. Thither Macduff
Is gone to pray the holy king, upon his aid
To wake Northumberland and war-like Siward ;
That, by the help of these, with Him above
To ratify the work, we may again
Give to our tables meat, sleep to our nights,
Free from our feasts and banquets bloody knives,
Do faithful homage and receive free honours ;
All which we pine for now. And this report
Hath so exasperate the king that he
Prepares for some attempt of war.

Len. Sent he to Macduff ?

Lord. He did : and with an absolute 'Sir, not I',
The cloudy messenger turns me his back,
And hums, as who should say, 'You'll rue the time
That clogs me with this answer.'

Len. And that well might
Advise him to a caution to hold what distance
His wisdom can provide. Some holy angel
Fly to the court of England and unfold
His message ere he come, that a swift blessing
May soon return to this our suffering country
Under a hand accursed !

Lord. I'll send my prayers with him.
[*Exeunt.*

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that if he had Duncan's sons in his custody—and may God forbid it—they should learn to their own cost what it was to kill a father ; so Fleance would have met the same fate. Let me say nothing more ; because Macduff spoke out his mind freely, and refused to attend the feast, he has already incurred his displeasure. Do you know, my lord, where he is staying now ?

Lord. The son of Duncan, whom this tyrant keeps out from the throne, lives at the English court. He has been so kindly received by the most pious King Edward that malicious fortune can rob little of the respect due to him. Macduff has gone there to appeal to the pious king for his assistance, so that the Earl of Northumberland and his warlike son, Siward, with God above to help us, may again restore peace and security to our distracted dominion, so that we may sit down to our meals without the fear of being poisoned, and sleep at night, without the fear of being murdered in our beds, so that we may offer our loyalty and allegiance to the rightful king and receive from him due honours. We now sigh for such an order of things. This rumour has so angered the king that he is preparing for war.

Len. Did he send for Macduff ?

Lord. He did, and Macduff sent back the frowning messenger with a positive refusal to come. And as he returns the murmurs to himself, 'you will regret the message with which you burden me.'

Len. In such a case he will be well advised to be on his guard and to put as much distance between himself and the tyrant as his good sense will dictate. May some heavenly angel visit the court of England before the arrival of Macduff and reveal the message which he intends to carry to the king, so that our country, now groaning under the heels of tyranny, may be blessed with happiness all the sooner.

Lord. Let my prayers go with him.

[*Exeunt.*

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ACT IV

Scene I. *A Cavern. In the middle, a boiling Cauldron. Thunder. Enter the three* Witches

First Witch. Thrice the brinded cat hath mew'd.

Second Witch. Thrice and once the hedge-pig whined.

Third Witch. Harpier cries : 'T is time, 't is time.

First Witch. Round about the cauldron go ;

In the poison'd entrails throw.
Toad, that under cold stone
Days and nights has thirty-one
Swelter'd venom sleeping got,
Boil thou first i' the charmed pot.

All. Double, double toil and trouble ;
Fire burn and cauldron bubble.

Second Witch. Fillet of a fenny snake,

In the cauldron boil and bake ;
Eye of newt, and toe of frog,
Wool of bat, and tongue of dog,
Adder's fork, and blind-worm's sting,
Lizard's leg, and howlet's wing,
For a charm of powerful trouble,
Like a hell-broth boil and bubble.

All. Double, double toil and trouble ;
Fire burn and cauldron bubble.

Third Witch. Scale of dragon, tooth of wolf,

Witches' mummy, maw and gulf
Of the ravin'd salt-sea shark,
Root of hemlock digg'd i' the dark,
Liver of blaspheming Jew,
Gall of goat, and slips of yew
Sliver'd in the moon's eclipse,
Nose of Turk, and Tartar's lips,
Finger of birth-strangled babe
Ditch-deliver'd by a drab,
Make the gruel thick and slab :
Add thereto a tiger's chaudron,
For the ingredients of our cauldron,

All. Double, double toil and trouble ;
Fire burn and cauldron bubble.

Second Witch. Cool it with a baboon's blood,

Then the charm is firm and good.

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ACT IV

Scene I. A Cavern. In the middle, a boiling Caldron.

Thunder. Enter the three Witches.

First Witch. Three times has my attendant spirit, the striped cat, mewed.

Second Witch. Four times has the hedge-hog uttered its moaning cry.

Third Witch. Harpier, my attendant spirit, cries that it is time.

First Witch. Let us go round the caldron, and throw in the poisoned entrails of animals. Let us first boil the toad that had let out poison through the skin under the cold stone for thirty-one days and nights, and was captured when sleeping. Let us boil this first in the caldron.

All. Let the caldron boil and simmer till the enchantment, ripe in mischief, is prepared.

Second Witch. Let us boil the slices of a snake caught in a fen. Let us prepare a powerful enchantment, from the eye of a newt, the toe of a frog, the hair of the bat, the tongue of a dog, the forked tongue of a snake, the sting of a glow-worm, the leg of a lizard, and a wing of an owl. Let us prepare this hellish broth, which will act as powerful in doing harm.

All. Let the caldron boil and simmer, and let the enchantment, ripe in mischief, be made ready.

Third Witch. Let us throw in the scaly skin of a dragon, the tooth of a wolf, the mummy of a witch, the stomach and gullet of a revenous shark, caught in the salt sea, the root of the poisonous hemlock, dug out in dark, the liver of an unbelieving Jew, the bile of goat, some slips of the poisonous yew, cut during an eclipse of the moon, the nose of a heathen Turk, and the lips of a Tartar, the fingers of an illegitimate baby, strangled to death at his birth and therefore dying unchristened, and let us make the broth thick and slimy. And to the rest the entrails of a tiger to make up the ingredients of our charm.

All. Let the caldron boil and simmer till the fateful enchantment is made ready.

Second Witch. Let the broth be cooled with the blood of a baboon. Now the charm is quite efficacious.

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Enter Hecate.

Hec. O ! well done ! I commend your pains,
And every one shall share i' the gains
And now about the cauldron sing,
Like elves and fairies in a ring,
Enchanting all that you put in.

[*Music and a song* : "Black spirits," &c.

Second Witch. By the pricking of my thumbs,
Something wicked this way comes.
Open, locks,
Whoever knocks,

Enter Macbeth.

Macb. How now, you secret, black, and midnight hags !
What is't you do ?

All. A deed without a name.

Macb. I conjure you, by that which you, profess,
Howe'er you come to know it, answer me :
Though you unite the winds and let them fight
Against the churches ; though the yesty waves
Confound and swallow navigation up ;
Though bladed corn be lodged and trees blown down ;
Though castles topple on their warders' heads ;
Though palaces and pyramids do slope
Their heads to their foundations ; though the treasure
Of nature's germens tumble all together,
Even till destruction sicken ; answer me
To what I ask you.

First Witch. Speak.

Second Witch. Demand.

Third Witch. We'll answer.

First Witch. Say if thou'dst rather hear it from our mouths,
Or from our masters ?

Macb. Call 'em ; let me see 'em.

First Witch. Pour in sow's blood, that hath eaten
Her nine farrow ; grease that's sweaten
From the murderer's gibbet throw
Into the flame.

All. Come, high or low ;
Thyself and office deftly show !

Thunder. *First* Apparition, *an armed Head.*

Macb. Tell me, thou unknown power,—

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Enter Hecate, *to the other three* Witches.

Hec. well done. Let me praise you for the trouble you have taken ; and everyone of you shall have a share of the reward. Now let us sing as we go round the caldron like fairies dancing in a ring, uttering the magic upon the preparation.

[*Music, and a song*, "Black spirits, etc.

[Hecate *retires*.

Second Witch. As my thumbs have a pricking sensation, I feel that some evil creature is approaching this way. [*Knocking*. Locks, give way to him who seeks entrance.

Enter Macbeth.

Macb. What are you about, you black hags that work secretly at midnight ?

All. It is a nameless deed.

Macb. By virtue of your supernatural power I charge you to answer my questions, whatever may be the source of your information. I do not care though you let loose all the winds to blow against the holy churches and lash the waves of the sea into fury which wreck and swallow up the ships. I do not care though by the storm you may raise, the ears of corn are scattered, trees uprooted and castles blown down on the heads of sentinels, and palaces and pyramids razed to the ground and all the stock of nature's fruitful seeds thrown into a confused heap, till destruction seems to be surfeited with the havoc it has done. Now answer the questions that I put to you.

First Witch. Let me hear your questions.

Second Witch. You may put your questions.

Third Witch. And we are going to answer them.

First Witch. Would you like to hear the answers from our own mouths, or from powerful spirits who are superior to us ?

Macb. Summon those spirits : let me see them.

First Witch. Let us pour into the caldron the blood of a sow that has devoured her litter of nine ; and throw also into the fire the fat that has dripped from the gallows of a murderer.'

All. Great and small, come forth, and show by your act and skill what you can accomplish.

Thunder. *First* Apparition : *an armed Head.*

Macb. Tell me, O mysterious power,

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First Witch. He knows thy thought :
Hear his speech, but say thou nought.

First App. Macbeth ! Macbeth ! Macbeth ! beware
Macduff ;
Beware the Thane of Fife. Dismiss me. Enough.
[*Descends.*

Macb. Whate'er thou art, for thy good caution thanks ;
Thou hast harp'd my fear aright. But one word more,—

First Witch. He will not be commanded : here's another,
More potent than the first.

Thunder. Second Apparition, *a bloody* Child.

Sec. App. Macbeth ! Macbeth ! Macbeth !

Macb. Had I three ears, I'd here thee.

Sec. App. Be bloody, bold, and resolute ; laugh to scorn
The power of man, for none of woman born
Shall harm Macbeth. [*Descends.*

Macb. Then live, Macduff : what need I fear of thee ?
But yet I'll make assurance double sure,
And take a bond of fate : thou shalt not live ;
That I may tell pale-hearted fear it lies,
And sleep in spite of thunder.

Thunder. Third Apparition ; *a* Child *crowned, with a tree in his hand.*

What is this
That rises like the issue of a king,
And wears upon his baby brow the round
And top of sovereignty ?

All. Listen, but speak not to 't

Third App. Be lion-mettled, proud, and take no care
Who chafes, who frets, or where conspirers are :
Macbeth shall never vanquish'd be until
Great Birnam wood to high Dunsinane hill
Shall come against him. [*Descends.*

Macb. That will never be :
Who can impress the forest, bid the tree
Unfix his earth-bound root ? Sweet bodements ! good !
Rebellion's head, rise never till the wood
Of Birnam rise, and our high-placed Macbeth
Shall live the lease of nature, pay his breath
To time and mortal custom. Yet my heart
Throbs to know one thing : tell me, if your art
Can tell so much, shall Banquo's issue ever
Reign in this kingdom ?

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First Witch. He knows what is in your mind. Hear what he says, but need not say anything.

First App. Macbeth ! Macbeth ! Macbeth ! be on your guard against Macduff ; the thane of Fife is your enemy, I can do no more service to you, let me go. [*Descends.*

Macb. O mysterious spirit, I thank you for your kind warning. You have rightly touched on my lurking fear. But let me ask one word more.

First Witch. He will not obey you. Here is another spirit, more powerful than the first.

Thunder. *Second* Apparition : *a bloody* Child.

Second App. Macbeth ! Macbeth ! Macbeth !

Macb. I could not hear you better even if I had three ears.

Second App. Be bold and resolute and do not stick at bloodshed. Defy the power of man, for none born of woman can ever harm you. [*Descends.*

Macb. Then let Macduff live. There is no reason why I should fear him. Yet I will leave nothing to chance, and take a guarantee of fate : I will not let him live, so that I may silence the fear that whispers in my heart, and sleep peacefully even when thunder is raging.

Thunder. *Third* Apparition : *a* Child *crowned, with a tree in his hand.*

What do I see here—a child who seems to be born of a king, and wears upon his brow the crown, the symbol of kingship ?

All. Listen, but do not speak to it.

Third App. Be as bold as a lion and be proud. Do not mind who rebels against you, or what conspiracies are made against you. Macbeth shall never be overcome untill great Birnam Wood shall move from its place and come to high Dunsinane hill. [*Descends.*

Macb. That can never be. Who can process the forest into his service and bid the trees loosen their roots where they are fixed in the earth. I welcome these predictions. Let not rebellion lift its head until the wood of Birnam rise against me, and there is every prospect that I, seated safely on my throne, shall live my alloted terms of years, paying the debt to nature in the usual way. Yet there is one thing my heart yearns to know : tell me, if your art can enlighten you—shall the descendants of Banquo ever reign in this kingdom ?

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All. Seek to know no more.

Macb. I will be satisfied : deny me this,
And an eternal curse fall on you ! Let me know,
Why sinks that cauldron ? and what noise is this ?

[*Hautboys.*

First Witch. Show !

Second Witch. Show !

Third Witch. Show !

All. Show his eyes, and grieve his heart ;
Come like shadows, so depart !

A show of eight Kings, *the last with a glass in his hand* ;
Banquo's Ghost *following.*

Macb. Thou art too like the spirit of Banquo ; down !
The crown does sear mine eye-balls : and thy hair,
Thou other gold-bound brow, is like the first :
A third is like the former. Filthy hags !
Why do you show me this ? A fourth ? Start, eyes !
What ! will the line stretch out to the crack of doom ?
Another yet ? A seventh ? I'll see no more :
And yet the eighth appears, who bears a glass
Which shows me many more ; and some I see
That two-fold balls and treble sceptres carry.
Horrible sight ! Now I see, 't is true ;
For the blood-bolter'd Banquo smiles upon me,
And points at them for his. [Apparitions *vanish.*
What ! is this so ?

First Witch. Ay, sir, all this is so ; but why
Stands Macbeth thus amazedly ?
Come, sisters, cheer we up his sprites,
And show the best of our delights.
I'll charm the air to give a sound,
While you perform your antick round,
That this great king may kindly say,
Our duties did his welcome pay.

[*Music.* *The* Witches *dance, and then vanish, with* Hecate.

Macb. Where are they ? Gone ? Let this pernicious hour
Stand aye accursed in the calendar !
Come in, without there !

Enter Lennox.

Len. What's your grace's will ?

Macb. Saw you the weird sisters ?

Len. No, my lord

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All. Do not ask any more question.

Macb. I must know it. If you refuse to tell me this, may you go to eternal perdition. Tell me what I want to know. Why is the cauldron disappearing ? And what music is this ?

[*Hautboys.*

First Witch. Reveal to him.

Second Witch. Reveal to him.

Third Witch. Reveal to him.

All. Reveal the sight to him and fill his heart with anguish. As you appear like phantoms, depart like phantoms.

A show of eight Kings, *the last with a glass in his hand ;*

Banquo's Ghost *following.*

Macb. Away ! You bear too close a resemblance to Banquo. The crown that you wear, withers my eyes. And your hair. O you, another crowned king is like that of the first, and so is the third's. Noisome hags ! Why do you show me all this ? A fourth yet ! My eyes start out of their sockets ! Is there no end to the line ? Will it spread on until the last trumpet announces the Judgment Day ? Yet eighth appears, who holds a mirror in his hand and in the mirror I see many others yet to come. Some of them bear two orbs and three sceptres ! What an appalling sight ! Now I see there is no getting away from it, for Banquo with his hair clotted with blood, smiles upon me and points his finger at them to indicate that they are his descendants. [*Apparitions vanish.* What ! Is this to be so ?

First Witch. Yes king, it shall be so. But why does Macbeth stand so lost and abstracted ? Come, sisters, let us cheer up his spirit and show him the best of our tricks. By my charm I will call forth musical strains out of the air, while you two dance the quaint ring dance, so that this mighty king may be kind enough to say that we did not fail with our loyal duties.

[*Music. The* Witches *dance and then vanish, with* Hecate.

Macb. Where are they ? Gone ? Let this evil hour be regarded as the most fateful in the calendar. Come in, you who are waiting outside.

Enter Lennox.

Len. What does Your Majesty command ?

Macb. Did you see the witches ?

Len. No, my lord.

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Macb. Come they not by you ?

Len. No indeed, my lord.

Macb. Infected be the air whereon they ride,
And damn'd all those that trust them ! I did hear
The galloping of horse : who was' t came by ?

Len. 'T is two or three, my lord, that bring you word
Macduff is fled to England.

Macb. Fled to England !

Len. Ay, my good lord.

Macb. [*Aside.*] Time, thou anticipatest my dread exploits ;
The flighty purpose never is o'ertook
Unless the deed go with it ; from this moment
The very firstlings of my heart shall be
The firstlings of my hand. And even now,
To crown my thoughts with acts, be it thought and done :
The castle of Macduff I will surprise :
Seize upon Fife ; give to the edge o' the sword
His wife, his babes, and all unfortunate souls
That trace him in his line. No boasting like a fool ;
This deed I'll do before this purpose cool :
But no more sights ! Where are these gentlemen ?
Come, bring me where they are. [*Exeunt.*

Scene II. Fife. Macduff's *Castle.*

Enter Lady Macduff, *her* Son, *and* Ross.

Lady Macd. What had he done, to make him fly the land ?

Ross. You must have patience, madam.

Lady Macd. He had none :
His flight was madness : when our actions do not,
Our fears do make us traitors.

Ross. You know not
Whether it was his wisdom or his fear.

Lady Macd. Wisdom ! to leave his wife, to le ave his babes,
His mansion, and his title in a place
From whence himself does fly ? He loves us not ;
He wants the natural touch ; for the poor wren,
The most diminutive of birds, will fight,
Her young ones in her nest, against the owl.
All is the fear and nothing is the love :
As little is the wisdom, where the flight
So runs against all reason.

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Macb. Did they not pass by you ?

Len. No, my lord.

Macb. May the air through which they fly, be poisoned and may those who put their faith in them be cursed. I hear horses tramp by : who rode past ?

Len. Some messengers my lord, who have come to inform you that Macduff has fled to England.

Macb. Fled to England.

Len. Yes, my lord.

Macb. [*Aside.*] Time, you have forestalled my fell designs. Unless a purpose is at once put into action, it vanishes, and cannot be recalled. Henceforth every first thought of my heart shall be the first action of my hand. Let me put it to test even now. Let what is conceived in my mind, be at once put into effect : I will storm the castle of Macduff ; seize upon Fife and put to the sword his wife, his babies, and all his kinsmen, who are unfortunate enough to be connected with him by blood. I am not merely boasting like a fool. I must accomplish my purpose before it loses its favour. Never again shall I seek to know my fate from apparitions like those that I have seen,—Where are those messengers ? Bring them to me. [*Exeunt.*

Scene II. Fife. Macduff's *Castle.*

Enter Lady Macduff, *her* Son *and* Ross.

Lady Macd. What has he done that he should run away from here ?

Ross. I pray you to have patience, madam.

Lady Macd. He showed no patience. His flight was an act of madness. Sometimes what we do out of fear will prove us traitors, rather any action of ours.

Ross. You do not know whether he acted wisely or out of fear.

Lady Macd. You talk of wisdom ? Is it wisdom to leave his wife, his children, his house and his property in a place where he does not consider himself to be safe ? He does not love us. He seems to be lacking the natural impulse of affection. The poor wren, the tiniest bird, will put up a flight to protect her young in her nest against the attack of an owl. What he has done seems to have been dictated by his fear ; it cannot be set down to his love. There seems to be as little of wisdom in his flight when it is so contrary to all reason.

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Ross. My dearest coz,
I pray you, school yourself : but for your husband,
He is noble, wise, judicious, and best knows
The fits o' the season. I dare not speak much further ;
But cruel are the times, when we are traitors
And do not know ourselves, when we hold rumour
From what we fear, yet know not what we fear,
But float upon a wild and violent sea
Each way and move. I take my leave of you :
Shall not be long but I'll be here again.
Things at the worst will cease, or else climb upward,
To what they were before. My pretty cousin,
Blessing upon you !

Lady Macd. Father'd he is, and yet he's fatherless.

Ross. I am so much a fool, should I stay longer,
It would be my disgrace and your discomfort :
I take my leave at once. [*Exit.*

Lady Macd. Sirrah, your father's dead :
And what will you do now ? How will you live ?

Son. As birds do, mother.

Lady Macb. What ! with worms and flies ?

Son. With what I get, I mean ; and so do they.

Lady Macd. Poor bird ! thou'dst never fear the net nor lime,
The pitfall nor the gin.

Son. Why should I, mother ? Poor birds they are not set for.
My father is not dead, for all your saying.

Lady Macd. Yes, he is dead : how wilt thou do for a father ?

Son. Nay, how will you do for a husband ?

Lady Macd. Why, I can buy me twenty at any market.

Son. Then you'll buy 'em to sell again.

Lady Macd. Thou speak'st with all thy wit ; and yet i' faith,
With wit enough for thee.

Son. Was my father a traitor, mother ?

Lady Macd. Ay, that he was.

Son. What is a traitor ?

Lady Macd. Why, one that swears and lies.

Son. And be all traitors that do so ?

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Ross. My dearest cousin, please hold yourself in patience. As for your husband, let me tell you that he is noble, wise, sensible and knows best the crisis the country is passing through. It will not be wise for me to reveal to you anything more: We are fallen on evil days, when we may be hailed up as traitors without our being aware of any treason in us ; when we readily believe in remours, prompted by our fear, though we do not know what we fear, and are subject to fits of wild apprehension, being tossed here and there by uncertainty. Let me say farewell to you now. I shall soon be back again. When things are at their worst, they cannot be worse any further ; they may take a better turn, and restore us to our former state of peace and security. God's blessing be upon you, my sweet little cousin.

Lady Macd. He is practically fatherless although he has a father living.

Ross. If I were to stay longer I would act foolishly—I would disgrace myself and distress you by exhibiting my weakness ; therefore, I take leave of you at once. [*Exit.*

Lady Macd. Well, little fellow, you have lost your father. What will you do now ? How will you live ?

Son. I shall live as the birds do, mother.

Lady Macd. What ! Will you feed upon worms and flies like the birds ?

Son. I mean I shall live on what I can get ; and so do the birds.

Lady Macd. My poor little bird, would you not be afraid of being caught by bird-lime, or in a net, or a snare, or a trap ?

Son. Why should I mother ? Nobody will bother to catch poor little birds like myself. I cannot believe that my father is dead, whatever you may say.

Lady Macd. Yes, he is lost. How will you get on without a father ?

Son. Nay, how will you get on without a husband ?

Lady Macd. Why, I can buy twenty such husbands any time.

Son. If you buy them, you will have to sell them again.

Lady Macd. You speak most sensibly ; and as a matter of fact you seem to possess understanding beyond your years.

Son. Was my father a traitor, mother ?

Lady Macd. Yes, he was one indeed,

Son. What is a traitor ?

Lady Macd. A traitor is one who is deceitful and false.

Son. Are all traitors like that ?

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Lady Macd. Every one that does so is a traitor, and must be hanged.

Son. And must they all be hanged that swear and lie ?

Lady Macd. Every one.

Son. Who must hang them ?

Lady Macd. Why, the honest men.

Son. Then the liars and swearers are fools, for there are liars and swearers enow to beat the honest men and hang up them.

Lady Macd. Now God help thee, poor monkey ! But how wit thou do for a father ?

Son. If he were dead, you 'd weep for him : If you would not, it were a good sign that I should quickly have a new father.

Lady Macd. Poor prattler, how thou talk'st !

Enter a Messenger.

Mess. Bless you, fair dame ! I am not to you known.
Though in your state of honour I am perfect,
I doubt some danger does approach you nearly :
If you will take a homely man's advice,
Be not found here ; hence, with your little ones.
To fright you thus, me thinks, I am savage ;
To do worse to you were fell cruelty,
Which is too nigh your person. Heaven preserve you !
I dare abide no longer. [*Exit.*

Lady Macd. Whither should I fly ?
I have done no harm. But I remember now
I am in this earthly world, where to do harm
Is often laudable, to do good sometime
Accounted dangerous folly ; why then, alas !
Do I put up that womanly defence,
To say I have done no harm ?

Enter Murderers.

What are these faces ?

First Mur. Where is your husband ?

Lady Macd. I hope in no place so unsanctified
Where such as thou may'st find him.

First Mur. He's a traitor.

Son. Thou liest, thou shag-hair'd villain !

First Mur. What ! you egg.
[*Stabbing him.*

Young fry of treachery !

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Lady Macd. Everyone who is deceitful and false, is a traitor, and deserves to be hanged ?

Son. Must all traitors be hanged ?

Lady Macd. Every one.

Son. Who will hang them ?

Lady Macd. Why, the honest men.

Son. Then these traitors must be fools, for they are more numerous than honest men, and they can easily beat and hang the honest men.

Lady Macd. May God take care of you, my little one ? But how will you get up without a father ?

Son. If he were dead, you would certainly weep for him; but if you are not going to weep, I know that I should soon have another father.

Lady Macd. How nicely do you talk, my little babbler !

Enter a Messenger.

Mess. God bless you, madam ! I am not known to you, though I know very well your high and honourable rank. I fear some danger is threatening you. If you will take the advice of a plain man, you should leave this place at once ; run away with your little ones. I am afraid I am too rude to frighten you thus. But I might do worse by not warning you of your danger, and so to harm you would be a very cruel act. May God keep you in safety ! I cannot stay any longer. [*Exit.*

Lady Macd. Alas, where should I fly ? I have done no ill to any body. But why should I forget that I am in this wicked world, where one is praised for doing harm and where one runs a great risk by doing good. But what is the use of making this womanly excuse. When I say that I have done no evil ? What devilish looks are these ?

Enter Murderers.

First Mur. Where is your husband ?

Lady Macd. I hope that my husband is not in such an unholy place where a man like you may get an access to find him.

First Mur. He is a traitor.

Son. You lie, you shock-headed knave.

First Mur. You unhatched chick ! [*Stabbing him.* You offspring of a traitor !

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Son. He has kill'd me, mother.
Run away, I pray you. [*Dies.*

[*Exit* Lady Macduff, *crying 'Murder,' and pursued by the* Murderers.

Scene III. England. Before the King's *Palace.*

Enter Malcolm *and* Macduff.

Mal. Let us seek out some desolate shade, and there
Weep our sad bosoms empty.

Macd. Let us rather
Hold fast the mortal sword, and like good men
Bestride our down-fall'n birthdom : each new morn
New widows howl, new orphans cry, new sorrows
Strike heaven on the face, that it resounds
As if it felt with Scotland and yell'd out
Like syllable of dolour.

Mal. What I believe, I' ll wail,
What know believe, and what I can redress,
As I shall find the time to friend, I will.
What you have spoke, it may be so perchance.
This tyrant, whose sole name blisters our tongues,
Was once thought honest : you have loved him well ;
He hath not touch'd you yet. I am young ; but something
You may deserve of him through me, and wisdom
To offer up a weak, poor, innocent lamb
To appease an angry god.

Macd. I am not treacherous.

Mal. But Macbeth is.
A good and virtuous nature may recoil
In an imperial charge. But I shall crave your pardon ;
That which you are my thoughts cannot transpose ;
Angels are bright still, though the brightest fell ;
Though all things foul would wear the brows of grace,
Yet grace must still look so.

Macd. I have lost my hopes.

Mal. Perchance even there where I did find my doubts.
Why in that rawness left you wife and child,
Those precious motives, those strong knots of love,
Without leave-taking ? I pray you,
Let not my jealousies be your dishonours,
But mine own safeties : you may be rightly just,
Whatever I shall think.

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Son. He has killed me, mother. Run away, I pray you !

Dies.

[*Exit* Lady Macduff, *crying* '*Murder* '!
Exeunt Murderers following her.

Scene III. England. Before the King's Palace.

Enter Malcolm *and* Macduff.

Mal. Let us go together to some lonely and shady spot, and there disburden our hearts of the sorrow in tears.

Macd. We should rather clasp hard the death-dealing sword in our hands, and like honest men stand by and defend our birthright, which has been brought so low. Each new morning there are made new widows, who wail their loss, new orphans that cry, new sorrows that shriek to heaven, so that it seems to echo the very cry of anguish, as if it were in sympathy with Scotland in her misery and degradation.

Mal. I will lament what I believe, and believe what I know, and I shall redress what I can, when I find the opportunity. What you have said, may be after all true. This tyrant whose very name seems to burn our tongues, was once thought to be a noble man. You have loved him well ; he has done no harm to you yet. I am young ; and by betraying me you may gain much from him, and it will be wise for you to sacrifice a poor innocent weak lamb to placate an enraged god.

Macd. I am not a traitor.

Mal. But Macbeth is a traitor. A man of virtue and innocence may deteriorate, when he assumes and exercises the power of a king. But I beg your pardon ; whatever I may think of you, may not change what you are. Angels have not yet lost their brightness, though the brightest of them fell from heaven. Though all evil things may wear the look of innocence, yet innocence must always look innocent.

Macd. I have then nothing to hope from you.

Mal. Perhaps you have nothing to hope for in respect of what I may have doubt about. Why did you leave in unwise haste your wife and children, the most treasured objects of one's affection without even the ceremony of leave-taking ? Do not please think that my suspicion casts any slur upon you ; it concerns you my own safety. Whatever I may think of you, you may be rightly honest.

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Macd. Bleed, bleed, poor country !
Great tyranny, lay thou thy basis sure,
For goodness dare not check thee ! wear thou thy wrongs ;
The title is affeer'd ! Fare thee well, lord :
I would not be the villain that thou think'st
For the whole space that's in the tyrant's grasp,
And the rich East to boot.

Mal. Be not offended :
I speak not as in absolute fear of you.
I think our country sinks beneath the yoke ;
It weeps, it bleeds, and each new day a gash
Is added to her wounds : I think withal
There would be hands uplifted in my right ;
And here from gracious England have I offer
of goodly thousands : but for all this,
When I shall tread upon the tyrant's head,
Or wear it on my sword, yet my poor country
Shall have more vices than it had before,
More suffer, and sundry ways than ever,
By him that shall succeed.

Macd. What should he be ?

Mal It is myself I mean ; in whom I know
All the particulars of vice so grafted,
That, when they shall be open'd, black Macbeth
Will seem as pure as snow, and the poor state
Esteem him as a lamb, being compared
With my confineless harms.

Macd. Not in the legions
Of horrid hell can come a devil more damn'd
In evils to top Macbeth.

Mal. I grant him bloody,
Luxurious, avaricious, false, deceitful,
Sudden, malicious, smacking of every sin
That has a name ; but there's no bottom, none,
In my voluptuousness : your wives, your daughters,
Your matrons, and your maids, could not fill up
The cistern of my lust ; and my desire
All continent impediments would o'erbear
That did oppose my will ; better Macbeth
Than such an one to reign.

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Macd. Let the poor country go to wreck then ? Great tyranny, establish yourself firmly, for good men have no courage to restrain you ; you may enjoy the honours that are ill-gotton ; your title is firmly seated. Farewell to you, my lord. I would not be the villain that you think me to be for the whole kingdom that the tyrant holds, with all the riches of the East thrown in.

Mal. Please do not take offence. I have spoken this not because I suspect you. I believe that my country is being dragged down beneath the weight of tyranny. It cries for belief. Each day fresh afflictions are inflicted on it. I believe too that support will not be lacking in my interest ; here from the kind-hearted King of England I have had already the offer of thousands of men to aid me. But in spite of all this, when I shall press my heels upon the head of the tyrant, or bear his head on my sword, my poor country will be afflicted with more vices and evils than it had ever been before, will suffer more and in various ways from one who succeeds the tyrant.

Macd. And who will that be ?

Mal. I mean myself. I know that vice in all its manifoldness is so deep-rooted in me, that when it buds forth, even Macbeth, however vicious he may be, will seem to be as pure as snow, and the country will regard him as a lamb when he is compared with me in my boundless capacity for doing evil.

Macd. Not in the whole troops of devils that hell can provide is there one more vicious than Macbeth.

Mal. Let it be granted that he is cruel, licentious, greedy, untruthful, treacherous, hasty and passionate, malicious, in fact possessed of every vice and sin that one can mention. But my sensuality is without measure. Your wives, your daughters, your matrons, your young maidens, all taken together, could not fill up the depth of my lust. And my desire would brook no restrain, and would bear down every opposition. It is better that Macbeth should continue to reign than that such a one should take his place.

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Macd. Boundless intemperance
In nature is a tyranny ; it hath been
The untimely emptying of the happy throne,
And fall of many kings. But fear not yet
To take upon you what is yours ; you may
Convey your pleasures in a spacious plenty,
And yet seem cold, the time you may so hoodwink :
We have willing dames enough ; there cannot be
That vulture in you, to devour so many
As will to greatness dedicate themselves,
Finding it so inclined.

Mal. With this there grows
In my most ill-composed affection such
A stanchless avarice that, were I king,
I should cut of the nobles for their lands,
Desire his jewels and this other's house ;
And my more-having would be as a sauce
To make me hunger more, that I should forge
Quarrels unjust against the good and loyal,
Destroying them for wealth.

Macd. This avarice
Sticks deeper, grows with more pernicious root
Than summer-seeming lust, and it hath been
The sword of our slain kings : yet do not fear ;
Scotland hath foisons to fill up your will,
Of your mere own ; all these are portable,
With other graces weigh'd.

Mal. But I have none : the king-becoming graces,
As justice, verity, temperance, stableness,
Bounty, perseverance, mercy, lowliness,
Devotion, patience, courage, fortitude,
I have no relish of them, but abound
In the division of each several crime,
Acting it many ways. Nay, had I power, I should
Pour the sweet milk of concord into hell,
Uproar the universal peace, confound
All unity on earth.

Macd. O Scotland Scotland !

Mal. If such a one be fit to govern, speak :
I am as I have spoken.

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Macd. Unrestrained self-indulgence is certainly an abuse in nature. It has been the cause of many kings being deposed before their time from their thrones. Still if it be so as you say, you need not hesitate to take the throne of Scotland, which is your birthright. You may satisfy your desires secretly as much as you like, and in public you may wear the mask of continence. You will have plenty of willing women to offer themselves to you. Your desire cannot be so devouring than there can be a lack of women to feed your passion—women willing to offer themselves up to their king when they find him inclined that way.

Mal. In addition to this sensuality, there is such an insatiable covetousness in my nature all compounded of evil, that if I were the king, I would kill the noble men of the country to seize upon their lands, rob this man of his treasures and that man of his house : the more I get the worse, will be my greed, so that I will even invent excuse for quarrelling with the loyal and the good in order that I may kill them for their money.

Macd. The greed of which you speak is no doubt a much worse evil than the former. It is more deep-rooted than transitory lust, and it has been the cause of the destruction of many kings. Yet you need not have any apprehension. Scotland has plenty to satisfy your avarice by giving what is after all your own. The vices that you have mentioned are not so unbearable, if they are counter-balanced by virtues.

Mal. But I have no virtues : all the kingly attributes such as justice, truthfulness, self-restraint, constancy, generosity, steadiness of purpose, compassion, humility, zeal, patience, valour, endurance—I breathe none of these virtues. On the other hand the manifold variety of every species of vice possesses me, and acts in a multitude of ways. Nay, if I had the power of a king, I would banish the sweet peace from earth to hell, and destroy all order and harmony.

Macd. Alas, for Scotland !

Mal. Say, if such a one is fit to govern. I am what I have described myself to be.

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Macd. Fit to govern !
No, not to live. O nation miserable,
With an untitled tyrant bloody-scepter'd,
When shalt thou see thy wholesome days again,
Since that the truest issue of thy throne
By his own interdiction stands accursed,
And does blaspheme his breed ? Thy royal father
Was a most sainted king ; the queen that bore thee,
Oft'ner upon her knees than on her feet,
Died every day she lived. Fare thee well !
These evils thou repeat'st upon thyself
Have vanish'd me from Scotland. O my breast,
Thy hope ends here !

Mal. Macduff, this noble passion,
Child of integrity, hath from my soul
Wiped the black scruples, reconciled my thoughts
To thy good truth and honour. Devilish Macbeth
By many of these trains hath sought to win me
Into his power, and modest wisdom plucks me
From over-credulous haste ; but God above
Deal between thee and me ! for even now
I put myself to thy direction, and
Unspeak mine own detraction, here abjure
The taints and blames I laid upon myself,
For strangers to my nature. I am yet
Unknown to woman, never was forsworn,
Scarcely have coveted what was mine own,
At no time broke my faith, would not betray
The devil to his fellow, and delight
No less in truth than life ; my first false speaking
Was this upon myself. What I am truly,
Is thine and my poor country's to command ;
Whither indeed, before thy here-approach,
Old Siward, with ten thousand war-like men,
Already at a point, was setting forth.
Now we'll together, and the chance of goodness
Be like our warranted quarrel. Why are you silent ?

Macd. Such welcome and unwelcome things at once
'T is hard to reconcile.

Enter a Doctor.

Mal. Well ; more anon. Comes the king forth, I pray you ?

Doct. Ay, sir ; there are a crew of wretched souls
That stay his cure ; their malady convinces
The great assay of art ; but at his touch,
Such sanctity hath heaven given his hand,
They presently amend.

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Macd. Fit to govern ! he is not even fit to live. O unhappy countrymen of mine, oppressed by the bloody rule of a tyrannical usurper ! When can we ever hope to see the restoration of peace and happiness, since the true-born son of the rightful king condemns himself by his own mouth, and casts a slur upon his noble parentage ? Your father was a saintly person : and your mother spent most of her time in prayers, living everyday as if she were fully prepared to meet death. Farewell. The evils which you ascribe to yourself make me a permanant exile from Scotland. The hope that I cherished in my heart, dies there.

Mal. Macduff, this outburst of noble indignation, which is prompted by sincerity, has banished all dark suspicion from my mind. I no longer doubt your good faith and honour. Wicked Macbeth has often sought to entrap me by these artifices. And it is in my interest that I am rather cautious. Let God above be a witness to our dealings. Even at this very moment I place myself under your guidance, and withdraw all that I have said against myself. I foreswear the vices I laid upon myself, for they have nothing to do with my nature. I have never yet known any woman : nor have ever broken faith with anybody. I have not even coveted things that are my own ; have never broken my pledge. I would not play false even with the devil himself, and truth is as dear to me as life. The first time that I spoke an untruth, was when I said things against myself. My true-self I now place at your and my unhappy country's service. Old Siward, Earl of Northumberland was about to set forth in my assistance with an army of ten thousand brave soldiers whom he had already assembled before you came. Now that you have come, we shall march together. May our success depend upon the justice of our cause ! Why do you not speak ?

Macd. It is difficult to adjust such pleasant and unpleasant thing at once.

Enter a Doctor.

Mal. Well, we shall speak more about it presently. Is the king coming out of the palace to-day ?

Doct. Yes, my lord, Several unfortunate fellows are waiting for him to cure them. Their disease is beyond the power of medical science, but at the mere touch of the king, who owes his sacred power to God, they at once recover.

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Mal. I thank you, doctor. [*Exit* Doctor.

Macd. What 's the disease he means ?

Mal. 'T is call'd the evil :
A most miraculous work in this good king,
Which often, since my here-remain in England,
I have seen him do. How he solicits heaven,
Himself best knows ; but strangely-visited people,
All swoln and ulcerous, pitiful to the eye,
The mere despair of surgery he cures ;
Hanging a golden stamp about their necks,
Put on with holy prayers ; and 't is spoken
To the succeeding royalty he leaves
The healing benediction. With this strange virtue,
He hath a heavenly gift of prophecy,
And sundry blessings hang about his throne
That speak him full of grace.

Enter Ross.

Macd. See, who comes here ?

Mal. My countryman ; but yet I know him not.

Macd. My ever-gentle cousin, welcome hither.

Mal. I know him now. Good God, betimes remove
The means that makes us strangers !

Ross. Sir, amen.

Macd. Stands Scotland where it did ?

Ross. Alas ! poor country ;
Almost afraid to know itself. It cannot
Be call'd our mother, but our grave ; where nothing,
But who knows nothing, is once seen to smile ;
Where sighs and groans and shrieks that rend the air
Are made, not mark'd ; where violent sorrow seems
A modern ecstasy ; the dead man's knell
Is there scarce ask'd for who ; and good men's lives
Expire before the flowers in their caps,
Dying or ere they sicken.

Macd. O ! relation
Too nice, and yet too true.

Mal. What's the newest grief ?

Ross. That of an hour's age doth hiss the speaker ;
Each minute teems a new one.

Macd. How does my wife ?

Ross. Why, well.

Macd. And all my children ?

Ross. Well too.

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Mal. I thank you, doctor. [*Exit Doctor.*

Macd. What is the illness that he speaks of ?

Mal. It is called the King's Evil. What the king performs is a miracle. Since my stay here in England, I have often witnessed it. He himself knows best with what prayers he secures the blessing of God. Men inflicted with this strange disease, all swollen and full of sores—a piteous spectacle—whom surgery can never hope to cure, are cured by this king. All that he does is to hang a stamped golden coin, with an appropriate prayer, round the neck of each patient. It is said that he transmits this blessed gift of healing to his descendant who succeeds to the throne. In addition to this remarkable power, he possesses the divine gift of prophecy. Many other heavenly blessings environ his throne proving him to be enjoying the fullest favour of God.

Enter Ross.

Macd. See, who comes here ?

Mal. My countryman ; but I do not know him yet.

Macd. My dear cousin, you are right welcome here.

Mal. I recognise him now. O kindly heaven, be kind enough to remove the causes that keep us strangers to ourselves !

Ross. So be it, my lord.

Macd. Does the state of things continue to be the same in Scotland ?

Ross. Poor country, it is so terror-stricken that it hardly knows itself. No longer can we call it our mother. It is rather our tomb, where nobody, who is aware of the state of affairs, is seen to smile, where the air rings with sighs and groans and shrieks of the oppressed—they are now so common, that they are hardly noticed. In my country now wild grief seems a commonplace ; nobody ever bothers to ask who has died when the passing bell is rung ; and the lives of honest men pass away more quickly than the flowers, which they wear in their caps, wither.

Macd. Your story is too minute in detail and yet it is true.

Mal. What is the latest calamity that you can report ?

Ross. Every moment breeds there a new calamity, so that the man who reports what happened an hour ago, brings himself into ridicules or repeating stale news.

Macd. How is my wife ?

Ross. Why, well.

Macd. And all my children ?

Ross. Well too.

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Macd. The tyrant has not batter'd at their peace ?

Ross. No ; they were well at peace when I did leave 't em.

Macd. Be not a niggard of your speech : how goes 't ?

Ross. When I came hither to transport the tidings,
Which I have heavily borne, there ran a rumour
Of many worthy fellows that were out ;
Which was to my belief witness'd the rather
For that I saw the tyrant's power a-foot.
Now is the time of help ; your eye in Scotland
Would create soldiers, make our women fight,
To doff their dire distresses.

Mal. Be't their comfort
We are coming thither. Gracious England hath
Lent us good Siward and ten thousand men ;
An older and a better soldier none
That Christendom gives out.

Ross. Would I could answer
This comfort with the like ! But I have words
That would be howl'd out in the desert air,
Where hearing should not latch them.

Macd. What concern they ?
The general cause ? or is it a fee-grief
Due to some single breast ?

Ross. No mind that's honest
But in it shares some woe, though the main part
Pertains to you alone.

Macd. If it be mine
Keep it not from me ; quickly let me have it.

Ross. Let not your ears despise my tongue for ever,
Which shall possess them with the heaviest sound
That ever yet they heard.

Macd. Hum ! I guess at it.

Ross. Your castle is surprised ; your wife and babes
Savagely slaughter'd ; to relate the manner,
Were, on the quarry of these murder'd deer,
To add the death of you.

Mal. Merciful heaven !
What ! man ; ne'er pull your hat upon your brows ;
Give sorrow words ; the grief that does not speak
Whispers the o'er-fraught heart and bids it break.

Macd. My children too ?

Ross. Wife, children, servants, all
That could be found.

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Macd. The tyrant has left them to themselves without seeking to disturb their peace ?

Ross. Yes. They were at peace when I took leave of them.

Macd. Do not mince words. Let me know how things stand there.

Ross. When I came here to bring you the news, which I have borne with a sad heart, there was a report that many good men had risen against him. I was confirmed in my belief when I myself saw Macbeth's forces in motion. Now is the time to render help. Your presence in Scotland would call forth soldiers, make even our women fight, so that they may get rid of their terrible miseries.

Mal. Let them be comforted with the news that we are going there. The kind-hearted king of England has lent us ten thousand men with Earl Siward of Northumberland as their leader. In all Christian Europe is not a man more experienced and valiant than the Earl.

Ross. I wish that I could give equally comfortable news. But the news I have to break is one that is to be shouted out in the lonely desert, where no human ear could catch it.

Macd. Whom does this news concern ? Is it a matter of general interest ? Or does it speak of a grief which concerns a single person ?

Ross. All right-minded people must share in this sorrow, though the substance of it concerns you alone.

Macd. If it concerns me, do not withhold it from me ; let me know it at once.

Ross. Do not hate me for ever because I have to speak words for your ears, the saddest that they have ever heard.

Macd. Wait ! I can guess what you have to say.

Ross. Your castle has been taken by storm ; your wife and children have been brutally murdered. If I were to describe the manner of their death, it would kill you, and thus add to the heap of those slaughtered victims.

Mal. Merciful God ! Nay, my good friend, do not pull your hat over your brow to conceal your grief. Give full vent to your grief. The grief which is tongue-tied, weighs down the overcharged heart until it breaks.

Macd. My children are gone too ?

Ross. Wife, children, servants, all who could be found in your castle.

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Macd. And I must be from thence !
My wife kill'd too ?

Ross. I have said.

Mal. Be comforted :
Let's make us medicines of our great revenge,
To cure this deadly grief.

Macd. He has no children. All my pretty ones ?
Did you say all ? O hell-kite ! All ?
What ! all my pretty chickens and their dam
At one fell swoop ?

Mal. Dispute it like a man.

Macd. I shall do so ;
But I must also feel it as a man :
I cannot but remember such things were,
That were most precious to me. Did heaven look on,
And would not take their part ? Sinful Macduff,
They were all struck for thee, naught that I am,
Not for their own demerits, but for mine,
Fell slaughter on their souls. Heaven rest them now !

Mal. Be this the whetstone of your sword : let grief
Convert to anger ; blunt not the heart, enrage it.

Macd. O ! I could play the woman with mine eyes,
And braggart with my tongue. But, gentle heavens,
Cut short all intermission ; front to front
Bring thou this fiend of Scotland and myself ;
Within my sword's length set him ; if he 'scape.
Heaven forgive him too !

Mal. This tune goes manly.
Come, go we to the king ; our power is ready ;
Our lack is nothing but our leave. Macbeth
Is ripe for shaking, and the powers above
put on their instruments. Receive what cheer you may ;
The night is long that never finds the day.

[*Exeunt.*

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Macd. And that at a time when I had to be away from there ! My wife killed too ?

Ross. I have already said so.

Mal. Take comfort. Let our revenge be the cure of our grief,

Macd. He has no children, and does not know what a father's grief is like. All my pretty children are no more ? Did you say that ? O hellish kite ? all gone ! What, all my pretty ones with their mother, swept off at one cruel stroke ?

Mal. Fight it like a man,

Macd. I will do so in time. But at present let me feel it like a man too. I cannot but remember that once I had a wife and children, who were so dear to me. How could heaven look on indifferently, and let them be butchered mercilessly ? Sinful Macduff, they are all done to death for your sake ! I am quite worthless. They were slaughtered not for their own fault but for mine. May God let them rest in peace !

Mal. May this sharpen your desire for revenge ! Let your grief be converted into rage ; let it not benumb your heart, but rather fill it with the fury of passion.

Macd. Oh, I could weep like a woman, and at the same time utter vain boasts of vengeance ! But kind God, cut short the interval before I meet this devil face to face ; bring us together, and let him approach the length of my sword ; then if he escapes me, let God forgive him too.

Mal. Now your words have the right manly ring in them. Let us go to the king. Our forces are ready ; all that we need is to take leave of the king. It is time that Macbeth were put down and the heavenly power sends us as the instruments of vengeance. Take what comfort you may from this thought. However long the night may be, the day must come at last.

[*Exeunt.*

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ACT V

Scene I, Dunsinane. A room in the Castle.

Enter a Doctor of Physic *and a* Waiting-Gentle-woman.

Doct. I have two nights watched with you, but can perceive no truth in your report. When was it she last walked ?

Gent. Since his majesty went into the field, I have seen her rise from her bed, throw her nightgown upon her, unlock her closet, take forth paper, fold it, write upon 't, read it, afterwards seal it, and again return to bed ; yet all this while in a most fast sleep.

Doct. A great perturbation in nature, to receive at once the benefit of sleep and do the effects of watching ! In this slumbery agitation, besides her walking and other actual performances, what, at any time, have you heard her say ?

Gent. That, sir, which I will report after her.

Doct. You may to me ; and 't is most meet you should.

Gent. Neither to you nor any one, having no witness to confirm my speech.

Enter Lady Macbeth, *with a taper,*

Lo you ! here she comes. This is her very guise ; and, upon my life, fast asleep. Observe her ; stand close.

Doct. How came she by that light ?

Gent. Why, it stood by her : she has light by her continually ; 't is her command.

Doct. You see, her eyes are open.

Gent. Ay, but their sense is shut.

Doct. What is it she does now ? Look, how she rubs her hands.

Gent. It is an accustomed action with her, to seem thus washing her hands. I have known her continue in this a quarter of an hour.

Lady Macb. Yes, here's a spot.

Doct. Hark ! she speaks. I will set down what comes from her, to satisfy my remembrance the more strongly,

Lady Macb. Out, damned spot ! I say !—One ; two : why, then 't is time to do 't. Hell is murky ! Fie, my lord, fie ! a soldier, and afeard ? What need we fear who knows it, when none can call our power to account ? Yet who would have thought the old man to have had so much blood in him ?

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ACT V

SCENE I. *Dunsinane. Ante-room in the Castle.*

Enter a Doctor of Physic *and a* Waiting-Gentlewoman.

Doct. I have kept watch with you for two nights, but have seen nothing to bear out your communication. When did you see her walk last in her sleep ?

Gent. Since His Majesty went to war, I have seen her get up from bed, put on her dressing-gown, unlock her cabinet, take out paper, fold it, write something on it, read it to herself and seal it before returning to bed ; yet all this time she was fast asleep.

Doct. It implies that she is suffering from a great mental disturbance. It cannot be otherwise when she is fast asleep, and yet at the same time keeps awake. Have you ever heard her say anything besides seeing her walking and doing anything, when she is thus excited in her sleep ?

Gent. I should not report what I have heard her say.

Doct. You may say it to me : it is most proper that you should.

Gent. I can repeat it neither to you, nor to anyone, because there is none to witness what I say.

Enter LADY MACBETH *with a taper.*

Behold, here she comes. This is the way she walks in her sleep : I can swear she is fast asleep. Watch her, and remain hidden.

Doct. How did she get that candle ?

Gent. It stood by her bed ; she has always a light about her ; it is her order that she must always have a light.

Doct. You see, her eyes are open.

Gent. Yes, but her eyes see nothing.

Doct. What is she doing now ? See how she rubs her hands.

Gent. It is usual with her to be thus engaged in washing her hands. I have seen her do it for a quarter of an hour.

Lady Macb. Yet here is a spot.

Doct. Listen, she speaks I may put down what she says to assist my memory.

Lady Macb. Away, accursed spot. One : two : it is time to do the deed. Hell is so dark ! For shame, my lord, you are a soldier, and yet in such a funk ! Why need we fear that they may know what we do, when there is none to challenge us to answer for it ? Who could have thought the old man would bleed so much ?

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Doct. Do you mark that ?

Lady Macb. The Thane of Fife had a wife ; where is she now ? What ! will these hands ne'er be clean ? No more o' that, my lord, no more o' that : you mar all with this starting.

Doct. Go to, go to ; you have known what you should not.

Gent. She has spoke what she should not, I am sure of that heaven knows what she has known.

Lady Macb. Here's the smell of the blood still : all the perfumes of Arabia will not sweeten this little hand. Oh ! oh, oh !

Doct. What a sigh is there ! The heart is sorely charged.

Gent. I would not have such a heart in my bosom for the dignity of the whole body.

Doct. Well, well, well.

Gent. Pray God it be, sir.

Doct. This disease is beyond my practice : yet I have known those which have walked in their sleep who have died holily in their beds.

Lady Macb. Wash your hands, put on your nightgown ; look not so pale. I tell you yet again, Banquo's buried ; he cannot come out on's grave.

Doct. Even so ?

Lady Macb. To bed, to bed : there's knocking at the gate. Come, come, come, give me your hand. What's done cannot be undone. To bed, to bed, to bed.

Doct. Will she go now to bed ?

Gent. Directly.

Doct. Foul whisperings are abroad. Unnatural deeds
Do breed unnatural troubles ; infected minds
To their deaf pillows will discharge their secrets ;
More needs she the divine than the physician.
God, God forgive us all ! Look after her ;
Remove from her the means of all annoyance,
And still keep eyes upon her. So, good night :
My mind she has mated, and amazed my sight.
I think, but dare not speak.

Gent. Good night, good doctor.

[*Exeunt.*

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Doct. Do you note what she says ?

Lady Macb. The thane of Fife had a wife. What has become of her ? What ! Will these hands never get clean ? Get rid of those starts, my lord. You spoil everything by giving way to your fits.

Doct. Enough ! Enough ! You have known what should never have been known.

Gent. She has spoken out what she should have kept to herself. I have no doubt about that. God only knows what she has gone through.

Lady Macb. It still smells of blood. All the perfumes of vast Arabia will not lend a sweet smell to this hand of mine. Oh, what a pity !

Doct. What a deep sigh is that ! The heart must be sorely burdened with grief.

Gent. I would not have such a heavy heart in my breast even for all the dignities of her royal person.

Doct. Well, Well, well,—

Gent. May God grant that all be well, as you say, sir.

Doct. This malady defies my skill. I have known those who have walked in their sleep : yet who died peacefully in bed at last.

Lady Macb. Wash your hands ; put on your dressing-gown ; do not look so pale. I tell you again Banquo is safe in his grave ; he cannot come out of it.

Doct. Does it go into that even ?

Lady Macb. Let us go to bed. There is some one knocking at the gate. Come, come, come, come, give me your hand. What is done, is done. Come to bed at once. [*Exit.*

Doct. Will she go to bed now ?

Gent. Yes, at once.

Doct. Dark rumours are in the air. Sinful deeds torture the mind with unnatural troubles. Minds, so preyed upon by remorse, will give out their secrets in their sleep. This lady requires more the service of a priest than that of a doctor. May God be merciful to us all ! Take care of her. Keep out of her reach all things with which she may do herself harm, and always watch her. Good night now. She has dazed my mind and amazed my sight. I dare not give expression to what rises in my mind.

Gent. Good night, good doctor.

[*Exeunt.*

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SCENE II. *The Country near Dunsinane.*

Enter, with drum and colours. MENTEITH, CAITHNESS.

ANGUS, LENNOX, *and* Soldiers.

Ment. The English power is near, led on by Malcolm,
His uncle Siward, and the good Macduff.
Revenges burn in them ; for their dear causes
Would to the bleeding and the grim alarm
Excite the mortified main.

Ang. Near Birnam wood
Shall we well meet them ; that way are they coming.

Caith. Who knows if Donalbain be with his brother ?

Len. For certain, sir, he is not : I have a file
Of all the gentry : there is Siward's son,
And many unrough youths that even now
Protest their first of manhood.

Ment. What does the tyrant ?

Caith. Great Dunsinane he strongly fortifies.
Some say he's mad ; others that lesser hate him
Do call it valiant fury ; but, for certain,
He cannot buckle his distemper'd cause
Within the belt of rule.

Ang. Now does he feel
His secret murders sticking on his hands ;
Now minutely revolts upbraid his faith-breach ;
Those he commands move only in command,
Nothing in love ; now does he feel his title
Hang loose about him, like a giant's robe
Upon a dwarfish thief.

Ment. Who then shall blame
His pester'd senses to recoil and start,
When all that is within him does condemn
Itself for being there ?

Caith. Well, march we on,
To give obedience where 't is truly owed :
Meet we the medicine of the sickly weal,
And with him pour we in our country's purge
Each drop of us.

Len. Or so much as it needs
To dew the sovereign flower and drown the weeds.
Make we our march towards Birnam. [*Exeunt, marching.*

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SCENE II. *A Country near Dunsinane.*

Drums and Colours. Enter MENTEITH, CAITHNESS.

ANGUS, LENNOX *and* Soldiers.

Ment. The English force has drawn near, under the leadership of Malcolm, his uncle Siward and the valiant Macduff. They are animated with the desire for revenge. The wrongs which have afflicted them so deeply, would revive a dead man and summon him to battle and to bloodshed.

Ang. We shall meet them near Birnam wood in the direction of which they are advancing.

Caith. Does any body know if Donalbain is with his brother ?

Len. I know definitely that he is not. I have a list of all the noble men in Malcolm's company. There is young Siward along with many other youngmen who have not yet grown their beards, though they are going to manifest their manhood in action.

Ment. What is our tyrant doing ?

Caith. He has strongly forfeited the castle of Dunsinane, Some say that he has gone mad, others who hate him less, say that he is desperately valiant. But it goes without saying that he cannot keep under discipline his disorganised followers.

Ang. Now he feels how the murders he has committed in secret, are haunting and tormenting him. Now every moment the desertion of his soldiers reminds him reproachfully of his breach of faith to his king. Those who still serve him, do so from a sense of military discipline, but not out of devotion. He now feels that the title of king he has enjoyed so long, is slipping off from him like a giant's dress from the person of a dwarf who has stolen it.

Ment. It is no wonder then that he is so distracted, and his faculties refuse to function—when the mind itself seems to be at revolt for being imprisoned in such a vile body.

Caith. Let us march on, and offer our alligiance to our legitimate prince. Let us join him, who comes to heal this kingdom of the ills from which it suffers, and let us shed in his company every drop of blood that flows in our veins, to cure our country of its distemper.

Len. We will freely shed as much of our blood as may be needed, in support of the claim of the rightful prince, and to get rid of the tyrant. Let us march towards Birnam wood.

[*Exeunt, marching.*

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SCENE III. *Dunsinane. A room in the Castle.*

Enter MACBETH, Doctor, *and* Attendandants.

Macb. Bring me no more reports ; let them fly all :
Till Birnam wood remove to Dunsinane
I cannot taint with fear. What's the boy Malcolm ?
Was he not born of woman ? The spirits that know
All moral consequences have pronounced me thus :
'Fear not, Macbeth ; no man that's born of woman
Shall e'er have power upon thee'. Then fly, false thanes,
And mingle with the English epicures :
The mind I sway by and the heart I bear
Shall never sag with doubt nor shake with fear.

Enter a Servant.

The devil damn thee black, thou cream-faced loon !
Where gott'st thou that goose look ?

Serv. There is ten thousand—

Macb. Geese, villain ?

Serv. Soldiers, sir,

Macb. Go, prick thy face, and over-red thy fear.
Thou lily-liver'd boy. What soldiers, patch ?
Death of thy soul ! those linen cheeks of thine
Are counsellors to fear. What soldiers, whey-face ?

Serv. The English force, so please you.

Macb. Take thy face hence. [*Exit Servant.*

Seyton !—I am sick at heart
When I behold !—Seyton, I say !—This push
Will cheer me ever or disseat me now.
I have lived long enough : my way of life
Is fall'n into the sear, the yellow leaf :
And that which should accompany old age,
As honour, love, obedience, troops of friends,
I must not look to have ; but, in their stead,
Curses, not loud but deep, mouth-honour, breath,
Which the poor heart would fain deny, and dare not.
Seyton !

Enter SEYTON.

Sey. What is your gracious pleasure ?

Macb. What news more ?

Sey. All is confirm'd, my lord, which was reported.

Macb. I'll fight till from my bones my flesh he hack'd.
Give me my armour.

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SCENE III. *Dunsinane. A Room in the Castle.*

Enter MACBETH, Doctor *and* Attendants.

Macb. I do not want to hear any more reports. Let them desert me. I cannot be subject to fear until Birman wood moves to Dusinane. What is there to fear in that boy, Malcolm ? Was he not born of woman ? The witches, who have predicted this for me : 'Do not fear, Macbeth, no man who is born of women. shall ever prevail against you'. Then let the treacherous thanes desert me and join the English minions. The mind that directs my actions, and the heart that beats with courage within me, shall never droop with a doubt, or tremble with fear.

Enter a Servant.

To hell with your face, white like cream, you base fellow ! Where do you get that look, pale and stupid as you look like a goose ?

Serv. There are ten thousand—

Macb. Ten thousand geese, you knave !

Serv. Soldiers, Your Majesty.

Macb. Go, scratch your face so that its redness may conceal the paleness, caused by your fear. You faint-hearted fellow ! What kind of soldiers, fool ? May you be damned ! That white face of yours inspires fear in my mind too. What soldiers, you white-faced fellow ?

Serv. The English soldiers, Your Majesty.

Macb. Take yourself away with your white face. [*Exit Ser.*

Seyton ! I am too troubled in spirit. When I see—Seyton ! I say ! This attempt of theirs to dislodge we will end either by seating me firmly on the throne, or deposing me. I have lived enough ; I am now declining into old age—with me it is now the decay of autumn. All that should accompany old age—honour, love, obedience, loyalty of friends. I must not expect to have ; but, in their place I shall be loaded with curses, which no one will dare to utter, but which will rise from the depth of his heart, lip-service, flattery, which the cowardly wretches would rather keep back if they dared—these will be my portion in life, Seyton !

Enter SEYTON.

Sey. What does your Majesty desire ?

Macb. Is there any other news ?

Sey. All that was reported, Your Majesty, has been found to be true.

Macb. I will fight till my bones are stripped of all flesh. Let me have my armour.

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Sey. 'T is not needed yet.

Macb. I'll put it on.
Send out more horses, skirr the country round ;
Hang those that talk of fear. Give me mine armour.
How does your patient, doctor ?

Doct. Not so sick, my lord,
As she is troubled with thick-coming fancies,
That keep her from her rest.

Macb. Cure her of that :
Canst thou not minister to a mind diseased,
Pluck from the memory a rooted sorrow,
Raze out the written troubles of the brain,
And with some sweet oblivious antidote
Cleanse the stuff'd bosom of that perilous stuff
Which weighs upon the heart ?

Doct. Therein the patient
Must minister to himself.

Macb. Throw physic to the dogs ; I'll none of it.
Come, put mine armour on ; give me my staff.
Seyton, send out—Doctor, the thanes fly from me.
Come, sir, dispatch.—If thou couldst, doctor, cast
The water of my land, find her disease,
And purge it to a sound and pristine health,
I would applaud thee to the very echo,
That should applaud again.—Pull 't off, I say.—
What rhubarb, senna, or what purgative drug
Would scour these English hence ? Hear'st thou of them ?

Doct. Ay, my good lord ; your royal preparation
Makes us hear something.

Macb. Bring it after me.
I will not be afraid of death and bane
Till Birnam forest come to Dunsinane. [*Exit.*

Doct. [*Aside.*] Were I from Dunsinane away and clear,
Profit again should hardly draw me here. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE IV. *Country near Birnam Wood.*

Drum and colours. Enter MALCOLM, *Old* SIWARD *and his* SON, MACDUFF, MENTIETH: CAITHNESS, ANGUS, LENNOX, ROSS *and* Soldiers, *marching.*

Mal. Cousins, I hope the days are near at hand
That chambers will be safe.

Ment. We doubt it nothing.

Siw. What wood is this before us ?

Ment. The wood of Birnam

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Sey. You need not require it now.

Macb. I will put it on. Sent out more horsemen ; scour the country round ; hang those who yield to fear. Let me have my armour. How is your patient doing, doctor ?

Doct. Not so bad, Your Majesty. Her trouble is that she is a prey to morbid fancies that crowd into her mind, and prevent her from getting sleep and rest.

Macb. Cure her of that. Cannot you give any relief to a mind that is sick, expel from the memory a sorrow which is deep-lodged there, blot out troubles that are imprinted on the brain, and with some remedy that will cause sweet forgetfulness, rid the heart of its burden of sadness which weights it down ?

Doct. In such a case the patient must be his own doctor.

Macb. Throw your medicine then to the dogs ; I will have nothing to do with it. Let me put on my armour ; give me my general's baton. Seyton, send out men at once. Doctor, the thanes are deserting me. Come, sir ; be quick. If you could, doctor, analyse medically my country, and diagnose its disease, and restore it to its former health. I would sing your praises, till they awaken never-ending echoes. Pull off my armour, I say. Is there any medical herb, any drug, that would purge this country of the English ? Have you not heard of the English coming here ?

Doct. Yes. Your Majesty. The preparations that you are making to meet them, have brought to our ears that news of the English.

Macb. Bring the armour after me. I have no reason to be afraid of death and destruction till Birnam woold comes to Dunsinane.

Doct. [*Aside*] If I could once get clear of Dunsinane, no prospect of gain would ever bring me here again.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE IV. *Country near Birnam Wood.*

Drums and colours. Enter MALCOLM, *old* SIWARD *and his*

Son MACDUFF, MENTEITH, CAITHNESS, ANGUS,

LENNOX, ROSS *and Soldiers marching.*

Mal. Kinsmen, I hode the days are drawing near when we shall be able to sleep in peace and safety.

Ment. We have no doubt that.

Siw. What wood is that before us ?

Ment. The wood of Birnam.

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Mal. Let every soldier hew him down a bough
And bear't before him : thereby shall we shadow
The numbers of our host, and make discovery
Err in report of us.

Soldiers. It shall be done.

Siw. We learn no other but the confident tyrant
Keeps still in Dunsinane, and will endure
Our setting down befor 't.

Mal. 'T is his main hope ;
For where there is advantage to be given,
Both more and less have given him the revolt,
And none serve with him but constrained things
Whose hearts are absent too.

Macd. Let our just censures
Attend the true event, and put we on
Industrious soldiership.

Siw. The time approaches
That with due decision make us know
What we shall say we have and what we owe.
Thoughts speculative their unsure hopes relate,
But certain issue strokes must arbitrate,
Towards which advance the war. [*Exeunt, Marching.*

SCENE V. *Dunsinane. Within the Castle.*

Enter, with drum and colours MACBETH,

SEYTON, *and* Soldiers.

Macb. Hang out our banners on the outward walls :
The cry is still 'They come !' our castle's strength
Will laugh a siege to scorn ; here let them lie
Till famine and the ague eat them up ;
Were they not forced with those that should be ours,
We might have met them dareful, beard to beard,
And beat them backward home. [*A cry of Women within.*]
What is that noise ?

Sey. It is the cry of women, my good lord. [*Exit.*

Macb. I have almost forgot the taste of fears.
The time has been my senses would have cool'd
To hear a night-shriek, and my fell of hair
Would at a dismal treatise rouse and stir
As life were in 't. I have supp'd full with horrors ;
Direness, familiar to my slaughterous thoughts,
Cannot once start me.

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Mal. Let every soldier cut down a branch and carry it before him. By this means we shall be able to conceal true actual numbers of our army, and mislead the spies about us.

Soldiers. We are going to do it.

Siw. All that we know is that the tyrant does not want to sally out of Dunsinane—he puts much faith in that castle—and will stand a siege.

Mal. It is his main hope. Both high and low, having had the opportunity, have revolted against him, and those who are serving him, are doing so under compulsion for their hearts are not in their work.

Macd. Let us suspend our judgment until the issue is decided, and in the meantime let us put forth all our energy as soldiers.

Siw. The time is approaching when the result being decided, we shall be able to measure our loss and gain. Mere speculation of what may happen can but lead to uncertain hopes, but the result can be decided by actual blows. Let us advance with our army for that purpose.

[*Exeunt, marching.*

SCENE V. *Dunsinane. Within the Castle.*

Enter MACBETH, SEYTON *and* Soldiers, *with drums and colours.*

Macb. Display our flags on the outer walls. We still hear that they are coming. Our fortified castle will defy the seige. Let them sit here till they are wiped off by starvation and shivering fever. Had they not been reinforced with those who should have served us, we might have met them defiantly, face to face, and repelled them easily till they fled to their homes—

[*A cry Of Women within.*

What is that noise ?

Sey. It is the cry of women, your Majesty. [*Exit.*

Macb. I have almost forgotten what fear means. Time was when a shriek at night would have sent a shiver through me, and my hair would have stood on end, as if they were alive. I have been satiated with horrors. All that is grim and terrible, since I have been used to murderous thoughts, horror cannot shake me now.

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Re-enter SEYTON.

Wherefore was that cry ?

Sey. The queen, my lord, is dead.

Macb. She should have died hereafter ;
There would have been a time for such a word.
To-morrow, and to-morrow, and to-morrow,
Creeps in this petty pace from day to day,
To the last syllable of recorded time ;
And all our yesterdays have lighted fools
The way to dusty death. Out, out, brief candle !
Life's but a walking shadow, a poor player
That struts and frets his hour upon the stage,
And then is heard no more ; it is a tale
Told by an idiot, full of sound and fury,
Signifying nothing.

Enter a Messenger.

Thou comest to use thy tongue ; thy story quickly

Mess. Gracious my lord,
I should report that which I say I saw,
But know not how to do it.

Macb. Well, say, sir.

Mess. As I did stand my watch upon the hill,
I look'd toward Birnam, and anon, methought,
The wood began to move.

Macb. Liar and slave !

Mess. Let me endure your wrath if't be not so :
Within this three mile may you see it coming ;
I say, a moving grove.

Macb. If thou speak'st false,
Upon the next tree shalt thou hang alive,
Till famine cling thee ; if thy speech be sooth,
I care not if thou dost for me as much.
I pull in resolution, and begin
To doubt the equivocation of the fiend
That lies like truth ; 'Fear not till Birnam wood
Do come to Dunsinane' ; and now a wood
Comes toward Dunsinane. Arm, arm, and out !
If this which he avouches does appear,
There is nor flying hence nor tarrying here.
I' gin to be aweary of the sun,
And wish the estate o' the world were now undon
Ring the alarum-bell ! Blow, wind ! come, wrack !
At least we'll die with harness on our back. [*Exeunt.*

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Re-enter SEYTON.

What was that cry ?

Sey. The queen, Your Majesty, is dead.

Macb. She should have died at a later time. Such news I might have put up with at a less anxious time. Our, life creeps on at a snail's pace from day to day and to-morrow is swallowed up in yesterday, until the whole span of life is run through. Each day that passes on, carries us, foolish witches as we are, farther on the way to the grave. Let the brief flame of life go out ! Life is but a passing illusion, a wreched actor who walks on the stage and rants for an hour or so, and then is heard no more ; life is a tale told by an idiot, full of idle vaunt and rage, but with little of meaning in it.

Enter a Messenger.

You come to tell me something ; out with it at once.

Mess. If it may please Your Majesty, I do not know how I should report what I have seen.

Macb. Well, go on, sir,

Mess. As I stood upon the hill, and kept watch, I looked owards Birnam, and immediately it seemed to me that the wood egan to move.

Macb. Liar and slave !

Mess. I am prepared to bear the brunt of your rage, if it is not true. Within three miles you can see the wood coming—the whole forest is in motion.

Macb. If you are telling a lie, I will hang you upon the next tree and you shall be there till you starve to death. But if what you say is true, you may as well do the same to me. I rein in my confidence, and begin to doubt the predictions of the witches who are the agents of the devil ; these predictions seemed to have a double meaning ; they are false while they wear the semblance of truth ; 'Do not fear till Birnam wood comes to Dunsinane.' Now the wood is coming towards Dunsinane. To arms at once and set out to meet the enemy ! If what he affirms proves to be true, there is no getting away from here, nor staying in. I begin to be sick of daylight and wish that the frame work of the universe had been destroyed. Ring the alarm. Let the wind blow and destruction come ! At least we will die fighting in our armour. *Exeunt.*

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SCENE VI. *The Same. A Plain before the Castle.*

Enter with Drum and colours. MALCOLM, *Old* SIWARD, MACDUFF etc., *and their* Army, *with boughs.*

Mal. Now, near, enough ; your leavy screens throw down,
And show like those you are. You, worthy uncle,
Shall, with my cousin, your right-noble son,
Lead our first battle ; worthy Macduff and we
Shall take upon's what else remains to do,
According to our order.

Siw. Fare you well.

Do we but find the tyrant's power to-night,
Let us be beaten, if we cannot fight.

Macd. Make all our trumpets speak ; give them all breath,
Those clamorous harbingers of blood and death.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE VII. *The Same. Another Part of the Plain.*

Alarums. Enter MACBETH.

Macb. They have tied me to a stake ; I cannot fly,
But bear-like I must fight the course. What's he
That was not born of woman ? Such a one
Am I to bear, or none.

Enter Young SIWARD.

Young Siw. What is thy name ?

Macb. Thou 'lt be afraid to hear it.

Young Siw. No ; though thou call'st thyself a hotter name
Than any is in hell.

Macb. My name's Macbeth.

Young Siw. The devil himself could not pronounce a title
More hateful to mine ear.

Macb. No, nor more fearful.

Young Siw. Thou liest, abhorred tyrant ; with my sword
I,ll prove the lie thou speak'st.

[*They fight and Young* SIWRAD *is slain.*

Macb. Thou wast born of woman :
But swords I smile at, weapons laugh to scorn,
Brandish' by that's of a woman born. [*Exit.*

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SCENE VI. *Dunsinane. A Plain Before the Castle*

Drum and colours. Enter MALCOLM, *Old* SIWARD,

MACDUFF *and their* Army, *with boughs.*

Mal. Now we have come near enough ; you can throw away the branches of trees and show yourselves in your actual strength. You, worthy uncle, shall, with my cousin, your worthy son, lead our first division of the army. Worthy Macduff and I shall lead the rest, and do all that is necessary according to the plan of action.

Siw. Farewell. If we meet the force of the tyrant tonight, let us be beaten, if we do not put forth all our energy in fighting.

Macb. Let all the trumpets sound—the noisy herald of bloodshed and death. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE VII. *Another Part of the Field.*

Alarums. Enter MACBETH.

Macb. They have hemmed me in—I am like a bear tied to a stake. I cannot run away and must face the enemy. Where is the man who was not born of woman ? I am to fear such a one and nobody else.

Enter Young SIWARD.

Young Siw. What is your name ?

Macb. It will strike terror into your heart to hear it.

Young Siw. No, though you may call yourself by a more detestable name than any in hell.

Macb. My name is Macbeth.

Young Siw. The devil himself could not have pronounced a title more detestable to my ear.

Macb. No, nor any name more dreaded by you.

Young Siw. You lie, hated tyrant ! I will prove that you are a liar at the point of the sword.

[*They fight*, and young *Siward is slain.*

Macb. You were born of woman. I defy swords and all arms, wielded by a man who is born of a woman. [*Exit.*

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Alarums. Enter MACDUFF.

Macd. That way the noise is, Tyrant, show thy face !
If thou be'st slain and with no stroke of mine,
My wife and children's ghosts will haunt me still.
I cannot strike at wretched kerns, whose arms
Are hired to bear their staves : either thou, Macbeth,
Or else my sword with an unbatter'd edge
I sheathe again undeeded. There thou should'st be ;
By this great clatter, one of greatest note
Seems bruited, Let me find him, fortune !
And more I beg not. [*Exit Alarums.*

Enter MALCOLM *and Old* SIWARD.

Siw. This way, my lord ; the castle's gently render'd :
The tyrant's people on both sides do fight ;
The noble thanes do bravely in the war ;
The day almost itself professes yours,
And little is to do.

Mal. We have met with foes
That strike beside us.

Siw. Enter, sir, the castle [*Exeunt Alarums.*

Re-enter MACBETH

Macb. Why should I play the Roman fool, and die
On mine own sword ? whiles I see lives, the gashes
Do better upon them.

Re-enter MACDUFF.

Macd. Turn, hell-hound, turn !

Macb. Of all men else I have avoided thee :
But get thee back, my soul is too much charged
With blood of thine already.

Macd. I have no words ;
My voice is in my sword, thou bloodier villain
Than terms can give thee out ! [*They fight.*

Macb. Thou losest labour :
As easy may'st thou the intrenchant air
With thy keen sword impress as make me bleed :
Let fall thy blade on vulnerable crests ;
I bear a charmed life, which must not yield
To one of woman born.

Macd. Despair thy charm ;
And let the angel whom thou still hast served
Tell thee, Macduff was from his mother's womb
Untimely ripp'd.

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Alarums. Enter MACDUFF.

Macd. A noise came from that direction. Tyrant, appear before me. If you are slain, and not by any blow of mine, the ghosts of my wife and children will never give me any peace. It is no use striking down the poor miserable soldiers, who have been hired to fight on his side. Either I must strike you. Macbeth, or I shall put up my sword with its undinated edge, having accomplished nothing. You are likely to be there ; that, clamorous noise announces one of the greatest distinctions. May fortune aid me in finding him ! I do not ask any other favour at your hands.

[*Exit. Alarums.*

Enter MALCOLM *and* Old SIWARD.

Siw. Come this way, my lord. The castle has surrendered without any resistance. The tyrant's people fight on either side. The noble thanes do their best. The victory is almost yours, and there is little else to do.

Mal. We have found some of the enemies, fighting on our side.

Siw. Enter, sir, the castle. [*Exeunt Alarums.*

Re-Enter MACBETH.

Macb. Why should I pray the part of the foolish Roman, and kill myself with my own sword. While I see living beings, it would be better to strike them dead.

Re-Enter MACDUFF.

Macd. Turn, you dog of hell !

Macb. I have shunned you of all men. You may yet return. My soul is too much burdened with the blood of the members of your family.

Macd. I do not want to waste any time in words. My sword shall speak for me. You are a more damned villain than words can express ! [*They fight.*

Macb. You are wasting your energy. As well may you wound with your sword the invulnerable air as draw blood from me. You should better let your sword fall on heads that are capable of being wounded. My life is protected by a spell, and will not yield to one born of woman.

Macd. You may abandon your faith in your spell. Let the angel whom you have ever served, tell you that Macduff was cut open before his time from his mother's womb.

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Macb. Accursed be that tongue that tells me so,
For it hath cow'd my better part of man :
And be these juggling fiends no more believed,
That palter with us in a double sense ;
That keep the word of promise to our ear,
And break it to our hope. I'll not fight with thee.

Macd. Then yield thee, coward,
And live to be the show and gaze o' the time :
We 'll have thee, as our rarer monsters are,
Painted upon a pole, and underwrit,
'Here may you see the tyrant.'

Macb. I will not yield,
To kiss the ground before young Malcolm's feet,
And to be baited with the rabble's curse.
Though Birnam wood be come to Dunsinane,
And thou opposed, being of no woman born,
Yet I will try the last : before my body
I throw my war-like shield. Lay on, Macduff,'
And damn'd be him that first cries, 'Hold, enough !'
[*Exeunt, fighting.*

Retreat. Flourish, Re-enter, with drum and colours, MALCOLM, *Old* SIWARD, Ross, Thanes, *and* Soldiers.

Mal. I would the friends we miss were safe arrived.

Siw. Some must go off ; and yet, by these I see,
So great a day as this is cheaply bought.

Mal. Macduff is missing, and your noble son.

Ross. Your son, my lord, has paid a soldier's debt :
He only lived but till he was a man ;
The which no sooner had his prowess confirm'd
In the unshrinking station where he fought,
But like a man he died.

Siw. Then he is dead ?

Ross. Ay, and brought off the field, your cause of sorrow
Must not be measured by his worth, for then
It hath no end.

Siw. Had he his hurts before ?

Ross. Ay, on the front.

Siw. Why then, God's soldier be he !
Had I as many sons as I have hairs,
I would not wish them to a fairer death :
And so, his knell is knoll'd.

Mal. He's worth more sorrow,
And that I'll spend for him.

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Macb. May you be cursed that tell me so, for it has subdued my manliness. Let not those evil spirits, plying with words, be trusted any more. They deal with us in equivocation. Their words have the deceptive air of truth, but believe our hopes. I will not fight with you.

Macb. Then yield to me, coward, and I will lead you about as a object to be exhibited. We will have an exhibition of you as our rarest monster ; you shall be painted upon a canvas, fixed to a pole, with the inscription below, 'Here you may see the Tyrant.'

Macb. I will not yied to kiss the dust before young Malcolm's feet and be tormented with the curse of the multitude. Though Birnam wood has come to Dunsinane, and you, being born of no woman, face me as my enemy, yet I will make a last stand. I cover myself with my shield. Now rain your blows, Macduff, and let him be cursed who cries first, 'Enough, let us cease !'

[*Exeunt, fighting, Alarums.*

Retreat, Flourish, Re-enter, with drum and colours,
Malcolm, *Old* SIWARD, Ross, *the other*
Thanes, *and* Soldiers.

Mal. I wish the friends whom we do not see here had safely returned.

Siw. Some must have been slain. Yet those whom I see present here, I must say that our victory has been bought cheap.

Mal. I do not see Macduff and your noble son here.

Ross. Your son, my lord, has died the glorious death of a soldier. He had been till now a boy, but he demonstrated his manhood when he appeared in the battefield. He died fighting at his post, whence he did not budge ; he died a manly death.

Siw. Then is he dead ?

Ross. Yes, and his dead body has been carried off the field. If his worth is to be estimated by your grief, then it can have no end.

Siw. Did he receive all his wounds on the front ?

Ross. Yes, all on the front.

Siw. I am then satisfied, for he is a soldier consecrated to God. If I had as many sons as I have hairs, I could not wish a more glorious death to them. So he is no more.

Mal. I will mourn him long, for he deserves our sincerest grief.

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Siw. He's worth no more ;
They say, he parted well, and paid his score :
And so, God be with him ! Here comes newer comfort.

Re-enter MACDUFF, *with* MACBETH'S *head.*

Macd. Hail, King ! for so thou art. Behold, where stands
The usurper's cursed head : the time is free :
I see thee compass'd with thy kingdom's pearl,
That speak my salutation in their minds ;
Whose voices I desire aloud with mine ;
Hail, King of Sotland !

All Hail, King of Scotland ! [*Flourish.*

Mal. We shall not spend a large expense of time
Before we reckon with your several loves,
And make us even with you. My thanes and kinsmen,
Henceforth be earls, the first that ever Scotland
In such an honour named. What's more to do
Which would be planted newly with the time,
As calling home our exiled friends abroad
That fled the snares of watchful tyranny ;
Producing forth the cruel ministers
Of this dead butcher and his fiend-like queen,
Who, as 't is thought, by self and violent hands
Took off her life ; this, and what needful else
That calls upon us, by the grace of Grace
We will perform in measure, time, and place :
So thanks to all at once and to each one,
Whom we invite to see us crown'd at Scone.
[*Flourish. Exeunt*

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Siw. We need not mourn him long. They say he died like a man, and paid his debt. So God may give him rest ! Here is coming somebody with more comforting news.

Re-enter MACDUFF *with* MACBETH'S *head.*

Macd. Greeting to you, King Malcolm of Scotland, for such is now your title. Look ! Here is the cursed head of the usurper. The day of freedom has come back again, I see you surrounded with the best of your nobility who all respond to my greeting. I wish they would own me with their voices in welcoming you as King of Scotland.

All. Hail, King of Scotland !

Mal. It shall not be long before we estimate and repay the love of each of you, and thus discharge our debt. My thanes and kinsmen, henceforth you shall be earls, the first that ever enjoyed that title in Scotland. What is else to be done to mark the new regime, is to recall our friends who have been living abroad in exile, who ran away from the risk of the suspicion of the tyrant, to bring to punishment the agents of this dead murderer and his devilish queen, who, as it is supposed, did away with her life by violent means. This and whatever else may demand our attention, we shall perform in their just and suitable degree, according to time and opportunity. So thanks to you all and to each one, and we invite you to our coronation at Scone.

[*Flourish. Exeunt.*

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NOTES AND EXPLANATIONS

Act I : Scene I

Analysis. Three Witches meet at a desert place amid thunder and lightning. They arrange to meet again when the battle is over. By sunset the battle will be over, and they are going to meet again upon a heath which Macbeth will pass through. They seem to be interested in Macbeth. To these Witches 'fair is foul and foul is fair.'

Critical Note. The scene, though brief, is charged with mystery and terror. "Fair is foul, and foul is fair" that is the very creed of the Witches' and it can only imply a topsyturvydom in the moral world. We also dimly realise that Macbeth is going to be brought under the influence of Witches. His fate is to work in conjunction with these evil powers.

"The poet's object was to raise the mind at once to the high tragic tone, that the audience might be ready for the precipitate consummation of guilt in the early part of the play. The true reason for the first appearance of the Witches is to strike the key-note of the character of the whole drama."—*Coleridge.*

Notes and Explanations

Stage Directions. **A desert place**—this is added by the Cambridge editors. **Desert**—desolate; barren. **Thunder and lightning**—"They appear in a desert place, with thunder and lightning; it is the barren place where evil has obtained the mastery of things." **Enter three Witches**—as a matter of fact the Witches do not really enter the stage; when the curtain rises, we see the Witches on the stage. **Three Witches**—three and multiples of three have a mystic significance.

1. **When**—at what time of the day; this is the emphatic word in the question The Witches usually meet in foul weather, and they have the power to raise a storm, and call forth thunder and lightning.

2. **In thunder, lightning, or in rain**—they represent the commotion of nature. The appearance of the Witches seems to be heralded by thunder, lightning, or rain. This disturbance of the elements is symbolical of moral disorder and confusion.

3. **Hurlyburly**—commotion; tumult of battle; uproar. Th- word is a reduplication of hurly, the second syllable echoing the first. *Cf. Pell mell helter-shelter,* etc. These words are onomatoe poetic. **Done**—finished.

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4. **When the battle's lost and won**—When the battle is lost by one party and won by the other. The battle is won against the rebels—Macdonwald and Sweno—and Macbeth has been sent against them.

5. **Ere the set of sun**—before sunset.

6. **Health**—flat waste moorland. The place is identified by some as Harmuir on the borders of Elgin and Nairn.

7. **There to meet with Macbeth**– on the heath we are to meet Macbeth face to face.

N. B. Here is the hint that Macbeth is to be brought under the influence of these supernatural creatures. In the third scene it is shown to us that Macbeth has been harbouring guilty thought in his mind. There is already a subtle bond between the Witches and Macbeth. In fact Macbeth's guilty thoughts invite the influence of the Witches. It is significant why Macbeth and not Banquo, falls a prey to the supernatural power of the Witches. Macbeth met them half way, for his mind was partly inclined to crime.

8. **I come, Graymalkin**—Graymalkin is the name of the cat which is the familiar, or attendant spirit of the first Witch. At this point from behind the stage comes 'mewing.'

9. **Paddock calls**—Paddock is the name of the load which is familiar to the second Witch. Now a 'croaking' is heard from behind the stage. *Cf.* "Some say they (witches) can keep devils and spirits in the likeness of toads and cats."—Scott's *Discoveries of Witchcraft*.

10. **Anon**—Immediately. The third Witch means to say that she is coming immediately in answer to the summons of her familiar spirit.

11. **Fair is foul and foul is fair**—All that is good is loathsome to the Witches, all that is evil is welcome to them. It has a symbolical meaning : the Witches cannot have anything to do with what is good ; evil is the very element of their existence—they will even turn good into evil. Their power and influence, therefore, introduce disorder and confusion in the moral world.

ACT I : SCENE II

Analysis.—King Duncan waits for the news of battle in a camp near Forres. A bleeding sergeant appears. Malcolm praises him because he risked his own life to save Malcolm from captivity. All that he can say of the battle is that the result seemed uncertain until Macbeth cut his way through the massed enemy, and met Macdonwald face to face and killed him. In fact Macbeth's remarkable valour decided the battle. The bleeding sergeant further reports that the battle was renewed when Sweno, King of Norway, came with reinforcement. But neither Macbeth nor Banquo was

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any the worse for this fresh attack. They laid about them more furiously than ever, and slaughtered a great many of the enemy. The sergeant is too faint to continue the story further.

Now enters Ross, who tells the rest of the story. It was again Macbeth who encountered the King of Norway, however, he might have been assisted by greater numbers. Finally victory came to Macbeth. Now the King of Norway sues for terms of peace. He was not allowed to bury his dead men until he had paid ten thousand dollars to be distributed among the army. Duncan pronounces sentence of death upon the Thane of Cawdor, and orders that the title be conferred upon Macbeth.

Critical Note. In the first scene our interest is awakened in Macbeth, because the Witches want to get hold of him, and bring him under their power. We do not yet meet Macbeth. But here is the report of his extraordinary valour which decides the battle. No less noteworthy is Duncan's appreciations of Macbeth. There is the hint of Duncan's blind confidence in Macbeth. The blind confidence is to be later the cause of his tragic fate. It should be noted that the style is epic rather than tragic. Instead of the battle being presented on the stage, the Sergeant and Ross are made to relate its main incidents. The exposition is continued in this scene ; we are informed of the condition of Scotland—the rebellion of Macdonwald, assisted by the Thane of Cawdor and by the King of Norway : we are given a vivid account of powers of Macbeth in the battle-field.

Notes and Explanations

STAGE DIRECTION. **Alarum**—a summon to arms. **Sergeant**—a man performing a kind of feudal service and fighting on horseback, next to esquires in rank ; much superior in status to the petty non-commissioned officers of the present-day, who have this designation.

1. **What**—who (with the added sense of 'what rank.') "In the Elizabethan and earlier periods, when the distinction between ranks was much more marked than now it may have seemed natural to ask as the first question about any one. "Of what condition or rank is he ?" In that case the difference is one of *thought*, not of grammar."—*Abbot*. **Bloody**—bleeding. **He can report**—he can give us the latest news of the progress of the battle.

2. **Seemeth**—it seems. **By his plight**—from the sad condition in which he appears. The Sergeant is bleeding from wounds he has received in battle. **Revolt**—rebellion of Macdonwald, a Highland chieftain.

3. **The newest state**—the latest development.

4. **A good and hardy soldier**—a loyal and brave soldier.

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5. **'Gainst my captivity**—to save me from being taken prisoner.

6. **The knowledge of the broil**—all that you know of the battle.

As thou didst leave it—till the time when you left the scene of battle. **Doubtful**—undecided.

8. **Spent swimmers**—swimmers who have been quite exhausted and are out of breath. **Cling together**—look their arms together.

9. **Choke their art**—defeat their skill in swimming. There is a double meaning—the sense of suffocating.

7-9. (*Explanation*). **Double it stood.....art**—The Sergeant is describing the battle as it stood at the time he left it. The result seemed to be doubtful then. Neither army had the advantage of the other. They were fighting at close quarters, and were quite exhausted. They could show little of their skill or ability. Each side was fighting desperately. The position was not unlike that of two competing swimmers, who when quite exhausted, clasp each other, and both run the risk of being drowned.

9. **Macdonwald**—the name is a combination of Macdonwald and Donwald. Holinshed mentions them as separate persons.

10. **Worthy to be a rebel**—his own villainy cut him out for a rebel. **To that**—to that end, in order that he might be a rebel.

11. **The multiplying villanies of nature**—the inborn wicked tendencies, which go on increasing and making him more vicious than before.

12. **Do swarm upon him**—crowd into him in large numbers. **Western Isles**—the outer Hebrides. According to Holinshed, "a great multitude of people came from the 'western isles' to help Macdonwald," while the 'kerns and gallowlasses' came from Ireland. But it appears that Shakespeare, in condensing the narrative, brings the two kinds of Irish retainers from the western isles, which may mean also Ireland.

13. **Of**—with. **Kerns**—light-armed foot soldiers, drawn from the poor classes. 'Kerns' were the retainers of the Irish nobles, the two upper degrees being *daltins* and the *grooms*. They were ordinarily armed with a sword and a light shield, and were regarded as very good marksmen. **Gallowglasses**—heavy armed Irish soldiers, especially those who fought on horseback and were armed with sharp axes. According to some, gallowglasses were another class of retainers under the Irish nobles, and used a pole-axe as their weapons—they were described as firm of countenance, tall of stature, big of limbs, burly of body, strongly timbered, cheaply feeding on beef, pork and butter,

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14. **Fortune**—the goddess of fortune. **Damned**—accursed. **Quarrel**—cause of quarrel. **On his damned quarrel smiling**—favouring his wicked cause of quarrel.

15. **Show'd like a rebel's whore**—allied herself with him as if she were his mistress. **Show'd like**—it is also interpreted deceitfully pretended to be. **But all's too weak**—nothing could prevail against Macbeth. The historic present is used here. 'All' refers to reinforcements from the western isles and the favour of fortune.

16. **Well he deserves that name**—Macbeth is fully entitled to the title of 'brave'.

17. **Disdaining fortune**—defying fortune, or rather the advantage given to Macdonwald by fortune. **With his brandish'd steel**—waving his sword in his hand.

18. **Which smoked with bloody execution**—which reeked with the blood of the enemy slain in battle.

19. **Valour's minion**—the darling of valour or courage. **Carved out his passage**—cut his way through the enemy.

20. **Till he faced the slave**—till he encountered Macdonwald.

21. **which**—used for 'who'. **Shook hands**—took leave. **which ne'er shook hands**—Macbeth omitted the ceremony of hand-shaking before engaging in combat with Macdonwald.

22. **Unseam'd**—ripped up. A seam is the line of junction between two pieces of cloth sewn together, and the metaphor is taken from a tailor who cuts the stitches along the seam of a garment. **Nave**—navel. **Chaps**—cheeks.

23. **Battlements**—parapets with a series of rectangular notches, originally used in castles for defence.

9-23. (*Explanation*). **The merciless Macdonwald worthy to be a rebel.....his head upon our battlements**—The Sergeant describes in these lines the defeat and death of Macdonwald. He was **wicked**, quite vicious enough to take the part of a rebel. There was **no end** to the villainies with which he was burdened. He was supplied with light armed foot soldiers as heavy-armed horse soldiers from the western isles. And fortune seemed to have favoured his wicked cause. In fact fortune seemed to be acting as his mistress. But nothing could prevail against brave Macbeth. Macbeth was rightly entitled to that title. He scorned the favour which fortune showed to Macdonwald and waving his sword which reeked with the blood of the enemy slain, like the darling of valour, cut his way through the enemy till he came face to face with Macdonwald. He never paused to shake hands with him or bid him farewell but straight away ripped him up from the navel to the jaws, and fixed his head upon the parapets of the castles as a stern warning to the rebels.

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24. **Cousin**—Duncan and Macbeth were first cousins. Duncan was the son of Crinan, Thane of the Isles and western ports of Scotland by Beatrice, daughter of King Malcolm the late king ; and Macbeth was the son of Synell, Thane of Glamis, by Doada, another daughter of Malcolm.

25. **Whence**—from the direction from which. **Gins**—begins. **Reflection**—return, not shinning.

26. **Shipwrecking storms**—storms that destroy ships at sea. **Direful**—dreadful. **Break**—burst.

27. **So from that spring, whence comfort seem'd to come**—so from that very source which seemed to feed our hope. **Discomfort**—danger. **Swell**—comes to overwhelm us. The metaphor is taken from a flood which acts as a destructive agent.

25-28. (*Explanation*). **As whence the sun' gins his reflection... ...discomfort swells**—The Sergeant points out how the death of Macdonwald became the starting-point of fresh danger. It is true that the sun rises daily in the east and is a welcome sight. From the east again come storms that destroy ships at sea, and from the east break the dreadful thunder-storms. Similarly, though the slaying of Macdonwald by Macbeth, opened the chance of victory ; it was also the occasion of a violent attack on Macbeth and his followers.

29. **No sooner justice had**—refers to Duncan's army who fought for a just cause. **With valour arm'd**—supported by valour, as shown by Macbeth.

30. **Skipping**—both light-armed and cowardly. **Trust their heels**—seek safety in light.

31. **But**—than. **Norweyan lord**—Sweno, King of Norway. **Surveying vantage**—seeing his opportunity. From a survery of the field he thought he might be able to take Macbeth's forces in the rear and enclose them, if Macdonwald's troops had rallied. **Vantage**—favourable opportunity.

32. **Furbish'd**—polished. **New supplies of men**—reinforcement.

N. B. The reference here can only be to the men, sent by Cawdor. But as Shakespeare condenses the account given in Holinshed, there is a resulting confusion. In Holished, the first invasion is carried out by Sweno and is repulsed. Then Canute, Sweno's brother and King of England, sends another army to conquer Scotland but it is also routed. Shakespeare has made up the two invasions of Scotland into one.

33. **Assault**—attach. **Dismay'd**—frightened.

35. **As sparrows eagles**—as sparrows might frighten eagles.

36. **Sooth**—truth.

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37. **Cannons**—It is said that cannon was first used at the seize of Adrianople by Mohammad II in 1453. The first cannon cast in England was in 1443. Therefore it is an anachronism here. **Overcharged with double cracks**—charged with a double quantity of gunpowder. **Cracks**—literally the sound of the explosion, here the explosives.

38. **Doubly redoubled**—repeated with great force.

39. **Except**—unless. **Bathe in reeking wounds**—cause such slaughter as to be able to bathe in the blood flowing from the gaping wounds of the enemy. **Reeking wounds**—wounds discharging hot blood.

40. **Golgotha**—the place where Christ was crucified. It was outside the walls of Jerusalem. But according to some authorities, it was said to be the place where criminals were executed : in Arabic the word means a skull : hence the figurative sense of Golgotha is a burial place. **Memorize another Golgotha**—made that battle-field as memorable a field of slaughter as Golgotha.

41. **I cannot tell**—I do not know. The Sergeant gives way to his physical pain and breaks off in the midst of a sentence. The idea is : I do not know what they were aiming at ; I do not see why they should slay the enemy with such fury.

42. **Faint**—weak from loss of blood. **Gashes**—long deep wounds. **Cry for help**—need to be attended to at once.

43. **So**—as. **So well thy words become thee as thy wounds**—your speeches are as worthy of you as the wounds you have received in battle.

44. **Smack of**—suggest.

45. **Thane**—a title belonging in ancient times, to Anglo-Saxon nobles midway in rank between an Earl and Elderman, more or less equivalent to the modern earl. Thanes were originally personal followers of the king, but afterwards became powerful territorial nobility as the result of grants of land made in return for military services. **Ross**—a country in north-west Scotland.

46. **What a haste looks through his eyes**—it is shown in his eyes what a hurry he is in.

47. **That seems to speak things strange**—who bears a strange message. **Things strange**—unexpected news of the battle.

48. **Worthy thane**—a conventional phrase, like the modern 'the noble lord,' 'the learned judge.' **Fife**—a country north of the Firth of Forth.

49. **Banners**—military standards. **Flout the sky**—seem to defy the sky.

50. **Fan our people cold**—as those banners wave, they chill

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the hearts of our people with terror. "Ross, like the sergeant, describes the previous advantages of the rebels in the present tense, in order to set the royal victory in the strongest light of achievement. The Norwegian banners *flout or insult* the sky, while raised in the pride of expected victory. They are a bold display of *lawless ensigns in the face of heaven.*"—*Elwin.* Malone gives a quite different interpretation : "The meaning seems to be, not that the standards being taken by Duncan's force and fixed in the ground, the colours (*i. e.*, regimental flags) idly flapped about, serving only to cool the conquerors instead of being proudly displayed by their former possessors." **Norway**—the King of Norway.

51. **With terrible numbers**—with a very large army.

52. **Assisted by that most disloyal traitor**—assisted by reinforcements sent by Cawdor. In Shakespeare Cawdor did not actually take part in the battle. In Holinshed, Cawdor is not connected with the Norwegian invasion : he is charged with treason and condemned to death by Duncan after Macbeth has met the Witches. Shakespeare has changed the order of events in order to add to the dramatic effect of the prophecy of the second Witch.

53. **Cawdor**—five miles south-west of Nairn and fifteen miles from Inverness. **Dismal**—ill-boding.

54. **Till that**—till. **Bellona's bridegroom**—a person so brave as to be elected by the goddess of war as her bridegroom. Here Macbeth is meant. Bellona is the Roman goddess of war, sister of Mars, the god of war. **Lapp'd in proof**—clad in proof armour.

55. **Confronted him**—faced him. **With self-comparisons**—with equal strength, courage and skill.

56. **Point**—point of the sword.

57. **Curbing his lavish spirit**—checking his insolence. **To conclude**—to bring my narrative to an end.

58. **Great happiness**—I am so delighted to hear of our victory. **That**—so that.

59. **Sweno**—the historical basis is that Sweyn, King of England and Denmark, ravaged the north of England in 1013. Near Forres a monument called 'Sweno's Stone' is still shown as the place where Sweno was defeated. **Craves composition**—sues for terms of peace.

60. **Nor would we deign him burial of his men**—nor would we permit him to bury his dead soldiers.

61. **Disbursed**—paid. **Saint Colme's Inch**—St. Columba's Island now called Inchcolm, a small island in the Firth of Fourth, on which stand the ruins of an abbey, dedicated to St. Columba, an Irish Prince of the sixth century who founded many monasteries

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in Ireland, and did much to spread Christianity in Scotland and in the north of England. **Inch**—small island.

62. **Dollars**—an anchronism, because dollars were first coined in 1518. **To our general use**—to be spent by us in any way we liked.

63-64. **Deceive**—betray. **Deceive our bosom interest**—be allowed to enjoy my confidence and affection so that he may misuse them. **Our**—the royal plural. **Bosom**—close and intimate. **Interest**—the due part of share which a friend has in the affection of another. **Present**—immediate.

65. **His former title**—Thane of Cowdor.

66. **I'll see it done**—I will see to it that the sentence of death on Cawdor is carried out and Macbeth is invested with the title of Thane of Cawdor.

Act I : Scene III

Analysis. The Witches meet on a heath. They are three in number. Each tells the other of her adventures abroad. The first Witch had a quarrel with a sailor's wife, and vows to wreck the vessel in which her husband is. The second Witch promises her a wind ; so also the third Witch. The first Witch has control over the winds that blow across the ports. By her witch-craft she will drain the sailor as dry as hay, depriving him of sleep both by day and night till be pines away to death. The first Witch has got a pilot's thumb with her, and shows it to her companions. Now they hear the noise of drum. They know that Macbeth is coming. Then they dance round and round, hand in hand, till the charm which they are going to cast upon Macbeth, is prepared.

Macbeth and Banquo enter. Banquo first observes these haggard wildly clad Witches, who hardly seem to be human, and addresses them. The first Witch puts her finger upon her lips. Next Macbeth addresses them. The first Witch greets Macbeth as Thane of Glamis. The second Witch greets him as Thane of Cowdor. The third Witch greets him as the future King of Scotland. Banquo notices Macbeth startling at the last prophecy.

Banquo charges the Witches to predict his future. The first Witch says that he will be lesser than Macbeth and yet greater. The second Witch says that he will not be so happy as Macbeth yet much happier. The third Witch says that he will be the father of kings, but no king himself. Macbeth wants to know more of his future from the Witches. He cannot understand how he is Thane of Cawdor, or how he is likely to be king, but the Witches vanish without answering him. Both Macbeth and Banquo seem to doubt their eyes and ears.

Now enter Ross and Angus. Ross tells Macbeth that the king

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has heard of his brave deeds in battle. Angus offers his royal master's thanks to Macbeth. The Ross greets Macbeth as Thane of Cawdor Macbeth now learns that though the Thane of Cawdor is still living, he is under sentence of death, either, because he allied himself with the king of Norway, or secretly aided him, or he was guilty of both. Macbeth now muses to himself that the greatest of honours is still to come and asks Banquo whether he expects his children to be kings. Banquo deprecates any strong faith in the prediction of these Witches. They are instruments of hell, and betray men into evil deeds by telling truths in trivial matters. Macbeth still muses with himself ; two predictions have been fulfilled and they point to the greatest one that is yet to come. He begins to think that this supernatural soliciting cannot be either good or ill ; if ill, it could not have proved to be true in the first instance ; if good, Macbeth would have been tempted by the image of the shocking crime which could alone lead to the fulfilment of the third prediction He seems to be lost in a world of illusions. Banquo notices how he is rant. Howeve, instead of taking any active steps, Macbeth decides within himself to leave it all to chance. Chance may crown him without any effort on his part. Banquo thinks, 'Macbeth must have time to adapt himself to new honours that come crowding upon him. At last Banquo reminds Macbeth that it is time to get a move, Macbeth excuses himself to him because his dull brain was busy with things forgotten. He thanks Ross and Angus. To Banquo he promises to take over the matter at some leisure. Then they resume their march.

Critical Note. The Witches are presented again. They are waiting to meet Macbeth upon whom they are going to establish control. The question is often debated whether Macbeth was tempted by the Witches to the crime of murder. It ought to be noted here that Macbeth meets them half way. The difference in the attitude between Macbeth and Banquo towards the Witches is very conclusive. Banquo does not take the prediction of the Witches very seriously. But Macbeth as soon as part of the predictions is fulfilled, begins to contemplate the next step in his imagination. The image of murder already presents itself to his mind's eye. The subtle alliance between the Witches and Macbeth is only possible bacause Macbeth is half drawn to the crime. He seems to go through a spiritual convulsion :

> "My thought, whose murder yet is but fantastical,
> Shakes so me single state of man that function
> Is smother'd in surmise, and nothing is
> But what is not."

The envisaging of the crime accords well with the atmosphere of supernatural awe. "But here the Witches seemed less elemental, more like the malevolent hags of popular superstition."

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Notes and Explanations

STAGE DIRECTION. **Three Witches**—"These Witches or weird sisters are the embodiment, in visible form, of the malignant influences in nature, which are ever on the alert to establish an unholy alliance with the criminal instincts of the human heart. Theirs is an independent vitality of evil, whirling through the universe till it finds asylum in a soul where germs of sin lie ready to be quickened into life. That a subtle reciprocity already exists between Macbeth and these demoniacal force is emphasised at the outset by Shakespeare, for the witches' anarchical formula, 'fair is foul and foul is fair' is echoed in the Thane's first words on the heath near Forres, "So foul and fair a day I have not seen."—*Boas.*

2. **Killing swine**—It seems to be a favourite occupation of Witches. When the witch cast an evil eye on animal, it would die. Witches were supposed to have a malice against hogs, and whenever these animals died, the superstitious countryfolk attributed it to witchcraft.

5. **Munch'd**—munched : chewed with closed lips. **Quoth**—said.

6. **Aroint thee**—begone. It is said to be a term of exorcism of unknown origin. Some suppose that it is a corruption of the milkmaid's exortation to cows, 'ryndta' or rynt thee,' which means 'move out,' or 'get into the proper position for milking.' **Rump-fed**—(1) ill-fed, half-starved ; 'rump' being the refuse of meat given to servants in rich households and being either sold or given away by the servants to poor people. (2) Grossly led, pampered ; 'rump' being the best joint or meat. (3) Fat-rump ; 'rump' being used for the posteriors and 'fed' meaning fattened. (4) Fed on nuts ; 'rump' meaning also nut. (5) Desolute, unchaste, in which case, the witch might refer to the wantonness of the wives of sailors, as they had opportunity of getting into mischief when their husbands were at sea. **Ronyon**—a scabby or mangy woman. A term of abuse.

7. **Aleppo**—in the north of Syria. In Shakespeare's time it was part of the Turkish Empire. Once it was a great centre of trade between Europe and Asia. "To Shakespeare, as to Scott, the name 'Aleppo' is redolent of the malign magic of the East."—*Grierson.* **Master**—captain of a merchant-ship. **Tiger**—a very common name for ship at the time. In *Twelfth Night*, Shakespeare gives the same name to vessel. Hakluyt in his *Voyages* mentions a vessel of the same name ; Newbury and Fitch and others went in it to Tripoly and from there to Aleppo by Caravan in 1583.

8. **In a sieve I'll thither sail**—"In the account of 'the damnable life of Doctor Fian Sorcerer who was burnt at Edenbrough Januarie last 1591" etc., one Witch averred before the King and his council 'that upon the night of All hallawn-even last, she was accompanied

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as well with the persons aforesaid, as also with a great many other witches, to the number of two hundred, and that they all together went by sea, each one in a riddle or sieve, and went in the same very substantially with flaggons of wine, making merry and drinking by the way in the same riddles or sieves to the Kirk of North Berwick in Lothian, after that they had landed they took hands on the land and danced this reel or short dance, singing all with one voice.

"Commer goe ye before, commer go ye.
Gif ye will not goe before, commer let me." —*Grierson.*

9. **Like a rat without a tail**—a witch could assume the shape of any animal minus the tail. The absence of the tail enabled people to recognise witches. So the Devil, when he assumed human shape, was supposed to have cloven fee.

10. **I'll do**—I will have my revenge. His plan is to gnaw through the rudder of the ship, and so let it drift at the mercy of wind and wave.

11. **I'll give thee a wind**—witches were believed to have control of the winds. "Finnish wizards used to sell wind to storm-stayed mariners." The wind was enclosed in three knots ; if they undid the first knot, a moderate wind sprang up ; if the second, it blew half a gale ; if the third a hurricane..... The art of tying up the wind in three knots so that the more knots are loosed the stronger, will blow the wind, has been attributed to wizards in Lappland and to witches in Shetland, Lewis and the Isle of Man. Shetland seamen still buy winds in the shape of knotted handkerchief or threads from old women who claim to rule the storms. They are said to be ancient crones in Lerwick who now live by selling wind. Ulysses received the winds in a leathern bag from Aeolas, King of the Wind." —*Frazer's The Golden Bough.*

14. **I myself have all the other**—I have all the other winds under my control.

15. **And the very ports they blow**—I have control of the very ports upon winds' blow.

16. **Quarters**—directions, the thirty-two points in the mariner's compass.

17. **Shipman's card**—dial of the compass, circular card on which the points of the mariner's compass are marked off. It may also mean the seat-chart.

18. **Drain him dry**—cause his blood to dry up : make him waste away.

N. B.—Holinshed tells us that King Duff of Scotland once fell sick of a wasting disease under the influence of some witches, who dwelt near Forres and who practised magic rites on a wax figure, made in the likeness of the king.

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20. **Pent house lid**—the sloping eye-lid. A pent-house is a shed or outhouse with a sloping roof supported against the wall of the building. 'Pent-house' may be regarded here as proleptic because the eye lids slope downward when a man is asleep.

21. **A man forbid**—a man under a curse. Somes explain it as excommunicated from the church.

22. **Se'nnights, nine times nine**—a period of eighty-one weeks. **Se'nnights**—seven nights.

23. **Dwindle**—shrivel up. **Peak, and pine**--wear and waste away. **Peak**—grown sharp-featured, losing in fat and flesh. **Pine**—languish. There may be a reference to the Act of 1603, which punished witchcraft and magic preactices whereby any person shall be killed, destroyed, wasted, consumed, pined, lamed in his or her body or any part thereof. The witches used to set up an image of wax of their victim, and applied tortures to it.

24. **Bark**—ship. **Cannot be lost**—perhaps witches had no power to sink a ship.

25. **Tempest tost**—beaten about by storms. It may be remembered that King James, when returning to England from Denmark, after his marriage, encountered heavy storms, which delayed his ship. This was attributed to the evil influence of a cat, christened by sorcerers.

29. **Wreck'd as homeward he did come**—who was ship-wrecked when he was returning home. (*S. D.*) **Drum within**—the sound of drum indicates the approach of Macbeth. The sound comes from behind the stage.

30-31. **A drum, a drum...come**—these words are uttered deliberately and significantly. They are signal for the witches to go through their magical rites before meeting Macbeth.

32. **Weird sisters**—the pharse is suggested by Holinshed. Boethius (*History of England*) explains the phrase as 'Goddess of Destiny,' and Gavin Douglas, a Scottish poet, substitutes it for the Latin *Parcae* or fates. **Hand in hand**—forming a circle by holding one another's hands.

33. **Posters of the sea and land**—swift travellers by sea or on land.

34. **Thus do go about, about**—the Witches now dance round in a ring, holding one another's hands and singing the incantations.

35-36. **Thrice to thine.....make up nine**—the dance is repeated nine times, three times for each witch.

37. **Peace**—let us stop. **The charm's wound up**—the magic spell is completed.

38. **So foul and fair a day I have not seen**—let it be noted

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that Macbeth's words echo the last words of the Witches in scene I. From this it has been assumed that there is already a spiritual alliance between Macbeth and the Witches, which makes Macbeth an easy prey to their temptation. Here is an instance of dramatic irony, for Macbeth utters the words which have a wider significance to the audience, already aware of the Witches' words. Let it also be noted that the contrast between, 'foul' and 'fair' in the physical world represents the inner conflict between good and evil in Macbeth's soul.

39. **Is't call'd**—is it said to be ? A Scotticism which "betrays' and intimates knowledge of a land where distances are indefinite and the cautious natives are not ready to commit themselves to positive statement."—*Lewis Compsbell.* **How far is't call'd to Forres**—how much is the distance from here to Forres ? **What are these**—It is Banquo who first notices the witches. On looking more closely at them, he discovers that they are so unlike human-beings.

40. **Wither'd**—wizened : skinny. **Wild in their attire**—fantastic in their dress.

41. **That look not like th' inhabitants o' the earth**—who do not seem to be human creatures.

42. **Yet are on't**—yet they are on the earth. **Live you**—are you living creatures ?

43. **That man may question**—With whom it is possible for men to communicate by means of speech. Banquo is surprised at the sight of these hags, yet he seems to be anxious to question them and to find out what they are and what their business is on the heath. **You seem to understand me**—the witches make a sign to Banquo.

44. **Choppy**—chapped—having the skin cracked.

44-45. **By each at once.....skinny lips**—each of the witches put her chapped finger on her skinny lips and makes a sign to Banquo that he should not speak.

46-47. **And yet your beards.....are so**—I should think that you are women, but you wear beards, which prevent me from supposing that you are women. Witches and supernatural being would not speak unless they were spoken to. As the business of the Witches was with Macbeth, they ignored the speech of Banquo, but replied to the curt command of Macbeth. Let it be noted that Macbeth was superstitious. The dialogue shows that while Banquo takes things light-heartedly, Macbeth becomes more and more curious and serious.

48. **Hail to thee, thane of Glamis**—Glamis is a village about twenty-five miles north-east of Perth. The thaneship of Glamis was the ancient inheritance of Macbeth's family. Glamis Castle

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still stands, and in front of it is an obelisk called King Malcolm's grave.

49. **Thane of Cawdor**—the second Witch tells Macbeth what he has lately acquired, and what is known to the audience but not to Macbeth. An instance of dramatic irony.

50. **All hail, Macbeth ! that shalt be king hereafter**—that is a prediction that refers to the fortune, and none has the remotest hint of it.

51. **Start**—make a sudden involuntary movement of fear. Why does Macbeth start at the last prediction ? He has already a guilty mind. Even before Macbeth met the Witches he had been aspiring to the throne of Scotland. To heighten the dramatic effect, Banquo is made to notice the effect of the third. Witch's prophecy on Macbeth's mind.

52. **Things that do sound so fair**—utterances that predict good fortune for you. Banquo, with his innocent conscience, can see no harm in the prophecy that Macbeth will be king in future. He is a cousin of Duncan, and a brave and successful general as he is, he may one day succeed Duncan in the natural course of events. To Banquo there seems to be no reason why Macbeth should feel shy of this prophecy.

53. **Fantastical**—imaginary, unreal, mere creatures of the fancy.

54. **Which outwardly ye show**—which you appear to be in your external features. **My noble partner**—Macbeth.

55. **Present grace**—acquisition of honour at the present moment. **Great prediction**—prophecy of greatness which is to come in future.

56. **Noble having**—actual possession of nobility. This should be taken with 'present grace.'. **Royal hope**—hope of being the King of Scotland. This should be taken 'great prediction.'

57. **That**—so that. **He seems rapt withal**—he seems to be lost in thought as the result of the prediction.

54-57. (*Explanation*). **My noble partner.....rapt withal**—Banquo addresses the witches when he sees how lost in thought Macbeth is as the result of their predictions. The Witches have predicted for Macbeth fresh acquisition of honour at the present moment, and the kingship of Scotland to come in future. One of the Witches greeted him as thane of Glamis, which is a title that Macbeth already possessed. Another greeted him as Thane of Cawdor, an honour which Macbeth was soon to acquire, but of which he was unaware. The third greeted him as future king, and it was yet no more than a mere hope. Such was the effect of these predictions upon Macbeth's mind that he seemed so totally lost in thought.

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58. **Look into the seeds of time**—foresee the shape of things to come.

59. **Say which grain.....not**—predict which grain will bear fruit, and which will perish.

60-61. **Who neither.....hate**—Banquo makes it clear to the witches that he is indifferent either to their favour or to their hatred. In other words, he keeps a free conscience, unlike Macbeth's conscience, which is fettered by the prophecies of the witches.

65. **Lesser than Macbeth, and greater** – Banquo will be lesser than Macbeth because he will not be king, but greater than Macbeth because Banquo's children, not Macbeth's, will be kings.

66. **Not so happy, yet much happier**—not so happy because he will not be king, but happier than Macbeth because the crown will pass to his descendants.

67. **Get**—beget. **Though thou be none**—though you will not be a king.

70. **Stay, you imperfect speakers**—Macbeth's imagination has already been inflamed by the prophecies of the Witches, and he would not let them go until they had fully satisfied his curiosity. The witches are imperfect speakers because they leave Macbeth groping in the dark.

71. **By Sinel's death**—as the result of Sinel's death. Synell was Macbeth's father. The name is taken to be a corruption of Finley. Let it be assumed that Synell died after Macbeth had left for the battle-field and that Macbeth had not been formally installed as Thane of Glamis.

72. **But how of Cawdor**—it seems to be strange that Macbeth is 'unaware of Cawdor's treason. We may have to assume that Cawdor was not actually present at the battle, but secretly helped the King of Norway. It was Ross who knew of Cawdor's treason, but not Macbeth ; or it may be supposed that Macbeth pretended not to know of Cawdor's fate in order to elicit further information from the witches.

74. **Stands not within the prospect of belief**—seems to be incredible.

75-76. **Say, from whence.....strange intelligence**—tell me what is the source of this unknown information. **Owe**—own. **Intelligence**—information.

77. **Blasted**—withered, lighting, scorched, or barren and desolate under the spell of witchcraft. **Stop our way**—intercept us.

78. **Speak, I charge you**—Macbeth is excited and imperious. **Charge**—solemnly urge.

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79. **The earth hath bubbles**—these are but phantoms, they are as unsubstantial as bubbles of water. Note that Banquo takes a sane and also impersonal view of the Witches. The difference is that Macbeth has a personal interest, while Banquo has none.

80. **And these are of them**—these Witches are of the nature of bubbles that the earth throws up.

81-82. **What see'md corporal.....wind**—a moment ago they seemed to have a physical existence, and now they are no more than vapour. **Would they had stay'd**—I wish they had stayed a little longer.

83. **Were such things here as we do speak about** ?—I being to doubt my eyes and ears. Were the Witches about whom we speak now actually present on the heath ? Banquo is growing sceptical. It is all because he has no personal interest in them.

44-85. **Or have we eaten.....prisoner**—or have be tasted the herb which produces madness, and paralyses reason. **Insane**—causing madness. **Insane root**—either hemlock or henbane, or the deadly night-shade. Holinshed refers to the last plant. **Takes the reason prisoner**—deprives us of the faculty of reason.

86. **Your children shall be kings**—as Macbeth broods over the future, he cannot dismiss from his mind the unhappy thought that the crown will pass away to the children of Banquo.

87. **Went it not so**—was not the prediction of the witches to that effect ?

88. **Self-same**—very same.

90. **Success**—victory. **Reads**—has an impression of.

91. **The personal venture**—the daring facts that you performed.

92-93. **His wonders and his praises.....his**—the wonder excited in the king by your heroic deeds ; his praises are the praises that he would render to Macbeth. They contend with each other —as to which should be your or his—they would better change places. 'Thine' goes with 'praises', 'his' with 'wonder'. Praises expressed would belong to Macbeth, wonder unuttered would remain with Duncan. 'His praise of the doer is silenced by his wonder at the deed.'—*Grierson.*—**Silenced with that** –tongue-tied by his wonder.

94. **In viewing o'er the rest o' the self-same day**—in reviewing in his mind the events of that very day.

95. **Stout**—valiant.

96. **Nothing afeard**—not at all afraid. **What thyself didst make**—the slaughter that you made in the rank of the enemy.

97. **Strange images of death**—the various ghastly forms that the dead bodies assumed. **As thick as hail**—as fast as pellets of hail.

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98-99. **Post with Post**—one messenger on the heels of another. **Bear thy praises**—bring word of your heroic deeds which deserve to be praised.

100. **Pour'd them down before him**—narrated them to the king.

102. **Herald thee into his sight**—conduct you to the presence of the king.

103. **Not pay thee**—not recompense your services to the king. Angus implies that it is not for them but for the king to recompense his services. **Earnest**—pledge.

105. **Addition**—title.

106. **Can the devil speak true**—the witches were but the agents of the Devil. Part of their prophecies is fulfilled in the case of Macbeth. It makes Banquo wonder whether the Witch can really predict true event.

107-08. **Dress me.....robes**—invest me with a title which cannot be mine.

109. **Who was the thane, lives yet**—he who was the thane is yet alive, but is no longer the thane.

110. **Heavy judgement**—sentence of death.

111. **Which he deserves to lose**—which he deserves to lose for treason. **Combined**—allied.

112. **Line**—help of support. The metaphor is from the lining of a garment. **Rebel**—Macdonwald.

113. **Hidden help**—help secretly rendered. **Vantage**—opportunity. **With both**—by both methods—helping the Norwegian invaders as well as providing opportunity for Macdonwald's insurrection.

114. **Labour'd in his country's wreck**—worked hard for the destruction of his country.

116. **Overthrown him**—brought about his downfall. It may be assumed that Duncan, aware of the crime of Cawdor, investigated into the matter and found him guilty. He did not pass immediate sentence on Cawdor untill Ross informed him of the reinforcements that Cawdor had supplied to Sweno. **Glamis and thane of Cawdor**—Macbeth is still self-abstracted. He has already become Thane of Glamis and Thane of Cawdor. This partial fulfilment of the Witches' prophecy leads him to expect that the greatest, namely the kingship of Scotland, is to come later. He so far forgets him as to take no notice of Ross and Angus.

120. **Promised**—predicted. **No less to them**—that they should be king. **That**—prediction. **Trused home**—believed blindly.

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121. **Enkindle you into the crown**—incite you to aim at the crown. Banquo seems to be partly aware of the evil way in which the prediction of the Witches is working in Macbeth's mind. He sees Macbeth rapt in the dream of future. It cannot but be clear to him that the prediction of the Witches has come as a temptation to Macbeth.

122. **Besides the Thane of Cawdor**—besides the thaneship of Cawdor. **But 't is strange**—yet it is miraculous how one of the predictions of the Witches has come out true. Banquo puzzles over this : then an explanation suggests itself to him.

123. **Win us to our harm**—tempt us to evil.

124. **The instruments of darkness**—agents of the devil such as the Witches are. **Tell us truths**—tell us truths in minor particulars.

125. **Honest trifles**—fulfilment of their prophecy about unimportant things. **Betray's**—play false with us.

126. **In deepest consequence**—in matters of the highest importance.

122-26. (*Explanation*). **But 't is strange.....in deepest consequence**—This is Banquo's view of the partial fulfilment of the prophecy of the Witches. It surpasses his understanding how part of the prophecies of the Witches came out true. While he seems to ponder over it, an explanation suggests itself to him. The Witches are but the agents of the devil. The work to help the devil in ensnaring the soul of man. Often they will tell men truths in matters of little importance, and thus win their confidence. Later they will let them down in matters of deeper importance. Thus the Witches can acquire a mastery over the souls of men.

127. **Cousins**—Banquo addresses Ross and Angus. **A word, I pray you**—I would like to speak privately with you. **Two truths are told**—two truths, respecting the thaneship of Glamis and the thaneship of Cawdor, are told.

128. **Prologues**—Speeches delivered at the commencement of a play. **Swelling act**—the climax of the play—the act in the drama in which the plot reaches its full development. Swelling has also been explained as increasing in interest and grandeur.

129. **Imperial theme**—a subject concerned with the seizing of the throne.

127-29. **Two truths are told.....imperial theme**—When Banquo addresses Ross and Angus to have a private talk with them, Macbeth again loses himself in speculation. In two matters the prophecy of the Witches has come true till now. He looks upon this partial fulfilment of the prophecy of the Witches as an index to his latter success. If these two prophecies have been fulfilled,—he may well expect that the third prophecy regarding the

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kingship of Scotland will also come true. The first two prophecies, which have been fulfilled, are regarded as a preliminary to the coming honour which is the central plot of the play.

130. **Supernatural soliciting**—temptation by the Witches.

131. **Cannot be ill**—Macbeth would rather regard the temptation of the Witches as neutral ; it is neither good nor evil.

131-33. **If ill, why hath it given.....truth**—if the supernatural soliciting had been evil, it could not have a forefaste of successes, proving the truth of what is predicted. **Earnest of success**—guarantee of favourable results. **Commencing in a truth**—making a start with the true prediction.

134. **If good**—it cannot be good because the third prediction acts as an incentive to my ambition. Note that Macbeth is quite aware of the conscquences involved in the third prediction of the Witches. The point is that the throne of Scotland cannot be his without his initiative action, which can be nothing else than the crime of murder. The image of murder is now constantly present before his mind ; it becomes an obsession with him. **Suggestion**—temptation. "This supernatural soliciting is only made such to the mind of Macbeth by the fact that he is already occupied with the purpose of assassination. This is the true answer to the question which he puts to himself."—*Fletcher*.

135. **Whose horrid image**—the shuddering terror of murder, which is called up in a vision to my mind. **Unfix my hair**—make my hair stand on end.

136. **Seated**—firmly fixed. **Knock at my ribs**—throb violently against my ribs.

137. **Against the use of nature**—in an abnormal manner.

134-37. (*Explanation*). **If good, why do I yield.....against the use of nature**—As Macbeth ponders over the predictions of the Witches, two of which have already been fulfilled, he thinks that they cannot be either good or evil. He infers that it cannot be evil because two of the prophecies have come true ; so the whiches are not dealing on falsehoods. But at the same time they cannot be good. If they had been good, why does the third prediction act as an incitement to him to step into crime ? He is already haunted by the image of murder. It convulses his whole moral being. In fact, Macbeth has to struggle with this evil impulse, and in fighting down the thought of murder, he seems to be going through a spiritual crisis. **Present fears**—what frightens me now ; the bare idea of killing Duncan.

137-38. **Present fears are less than horrible imaginings**—Here is the first hint that Macbeth is dominated by imagination. If he had less of imagination and sensibilities, he would have made a confirmed criminal, and stepped on from one murder to anothe

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without a troubled conscience. It is through his imagination that retribution falls upon him. In the present instance, the bare idea of killing Duncan does not unnerve him as the visualization of the actual murder. **Horrible imaginings**—the terrors of the crime itself called up in imagination.

139. **Whose murder yet is but fantastical**—the murder which in contemplates exists only in imagination till now.

140. **Shakes**—disturbs. **My single state of man**—(1) the very kingdom of my being.—*Verity* ; (2) my weak state of mind.—*Stevens* ; (3) my simple condition of human nature—*Singer* ; (4) my mind in which thought alone is functioning, and action is paralysed.—*Elwin* ; (5) my composite nature (body, spirits, etc.,) made on by the soul—*Grierson* ; (6) the individual state or kingdom which consists of myself.—*Goggin* ; (7) my mind in which all faculties are at one, or act in union, undistributed by conflicting emotions.—*Clark and Wright*. The single state of man is but the microcosm as contrasted with the macrocosm (*i. e.*, the universe). So in *Julius Caesar* :

> "and the state of a man,
> Life to a little kingdom, suffers then
> The nature of an insurrection."

Function—power of action.

141. **Is smother'd in surmise**—is stifled in a crowd of wild fancies. Macbeth's mind is cripped by the apprehensions and surmises that throng upon him. His conscience here acts through his imagination, sets it all on fire, and he is terror-stricken.

141-42. **Nothing is but what is not**—his imagination being possessed with the thought of murder ; he seems to think that the material world has changed its value—all that existed as true and real, is no more and what was no more than an illusion, has now become true. "Facts are lost sight of. I see nothing but what is unreal, nothing but the spectress of my own fancy."—*Hudson*.

137-42. (*Explanation*). **Present fears are less than.....what is not**—Macbeth's imagination is possessed by the thought of murder, which is the only step of the throne of Scotland. Macbeth becomes convinced that without his initiative action, the third pediction of the Witches can hardly be fulfilled. But being dominated by imagination and sensibilities, he begins to shudder at the mere thought of murder. The imagination of the murder shakes all his nerves. The murder which he contemplates exists as yet in his imagination. But he is so distracted and convulsed by it that his power of action is paralysed, and what was unreal, seems to be real and what is real, seems to be no more.

142. **Rapt**—lost in thought.

143. **If chance will have me king**—distracted by horrible

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imaginings,' Macbeth would rather have it to chance, and take no steps himself to be the king of Scotland. **If chance.....crown me**—if it depends upon chance that I shall be the king of Scotland, I may as well leave it to chance.

144. **Without my stir**—without taking any initiative.

146. **Like our strange garments**—as it takes some time before we can adapt ourselves to our new garments. **Cleave not to their mould**—not fit properly, as they would do if they were made to measure. **Mould**—body.

147. **But with the aid of use**—except getting used to them, which is a matter of time. **Come what come may**—let things take their course. Macbeth simply postpones the conflict within him. He is not going to take any initiative to bring about the fulfilment of the last predication of the Witches.

148. **Time and the hour**—time composed of the sequence of hours. Figure of *Hendiadys*. **Runs through**—exhausts. **Roughest**—most troublesome. **Time and the hour.....day**—the present moments are most distressing to Macbeth. But believing, as he does, in chance, he thinks that these moments of confusion will soon pass away. The fated hour is sure to strike. He can rely upon time to set all right. It is an instance of dramatic irony. Chance will soon place Duncan in Macbeth's power.

149. **Stay upon your leisure**—wait until you are ready to resume the journey.

150. **Give me your favour**—excuse me for my absent-mindedness. **Wrought with**—excited by.

151. **Things forgotten**—things that I failed to recall. **Kind Gentlemen**—Ross and Angus.

152. **Registere'd**—recorded in my memory.

152-53. **Where every day.....them**—to which I must refer every day of my life. **Towards the king**—go to the king. The verb of motion is omitted.

154. **Chanced**—happened. **At more time**—when we have more leisure.

155. **Interim**—interval. **The Interim having weigh'd it**—having pondered over the matters in the interval. Grierson explains, "When time has brought counsel."

155-56. **Let us speak.....each to other**—let us discuss without any reservation what inmost thoughts are.

157. **Enough**—We do not want to talk any more on the matter at present.

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ACT I : SCENE IV

Analysis. Malcolm describes to Duncan the execution of Cawdor. Malcolm did not see the execution himself, but heard an account of it from another. Cawdor frankly confessed his treason, begged the king's pardon and expressed deep repentance. Nothing that he ever did in his life was more graceful than his dying. He seems to have been studied in his death. Duncan regrets the passing away of Cawdor on whom he built an absolute trust.

Then enter Macbeth, Banquo, Ross and Angus. The king at once addresses Macbeth, and is only sorry that whatever recompense he may make, falls far short of his own deserving. The king concludes by saying that more is his due than all that he can pay. Macbeth replies that the service and loyalty which he owes to his king, pays itself. His duty lies in doing everything in the interest of his king's love and honour. The king promises to promote and further the honour of Macbeth. Then he turns to Banquo, and to Banquo he gives no less praise than to Macbeth. The king is moved to tears by his generous emotion.

Then he accounts the nomination of Malcolm as the Prince of Chamberland. While Malcolm receives this honour, he promises that all his deserving countries will not miss their part in honour. The king invites himself to Macbeth's castle in Inverness. Macbeth proposes to go in advance, and communicate the happy news to his wife. But he is upset over the king's declaration of Malcolm as heir-apparent. It seems to spur his ambition. Either he will have to submit to this accomplished fact or he will have to set it aside. Murderous thoughts rise again in his heart and far from wincing he seems to look them straight in the face. After Macbeth departs, the king is still full of praises of him. The praise of Macbeth are a feast to him.

Critical Note. The scene is charged with dramatic irony. The king is hardly satisfied with the honours he has heaped upon Macbeth. He still thinks that he owes to Macbeth more than he can ever pay. When Duncan says that there is no art to find the mind's construction in the face, the dramatic irony becomes more pointed. It applies more to Macbeth than to Cawdor. If Macbeth had been wavering in his mind, he clearly defines his policy of action when the king proclaims Malcolm as the Prince of Cumberland. The change in Macbeth takes place quickly enough. In the preceding scene he would rather let chance to own him king without any initiative on his part. Nay he seems to have shrunk from murderous thoughts ; now they are hugged to his heart. His imagination which was shaken by the thought of murder, now slumbers in him.

Notes and Explanations

1. **Is execution done on Cawdor—has Cawdor been beheaded ? Done—carried out.**

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2. **In Commission**—specially charged to carry out the execution. 'Commission' literally means the document which delegates authority, specially the king's authority to another. It was Ross who was entrusted with the task of seeing to the execution of Cawdor. But Ross went to meet Macbeth and returned with him to Duncan's place ; so Ross must have delegated the task to the officials, and they are 'those in commission.' **Liege**—sovereign lord.

3. **Spoke**—spoken.

5. **That very frankly he confess'd his treasons**—that he made a clean confession of his acts of treason.

7. **Implored your highness' pardon**—begged your majesty's pardon. **Set forth**—showed.

7-8. **Nothing in his life.....like the leaving it**—nothing that he ever did in his life was more creditable to him than dying.

N. B. Malcolm seems to describe the death of Cawdor in the very accents of admiration. This had led some commentators to see in it a glance at the trial and execution of the Earl of Essex in 1601. Essex also confessed, repented, asked forgiveness, and behaved most admirably on the scaffold.

9. **Had been studied in his death**—had fully prepared himself for death as an actor does for playing the part he has rehearsed. 'Study's is a technical word, used of an actor learning his part by heart.

10. **Owed**—owned.

11. **As**—as if. **'Twere a careless trifle**—a thing of no importance.

7-11. (*Explanation*). **Nothing in his life become him..... trifle**—In describing the manner of Cawdor's death, Malcolm praises him very highly. Cawdor died in a manly spirit. If he stained the later years of his life by acts of treason, he is more than made up by his manly death. Nothing he ever did in his life was more graceful than the manner in which he died. He was perfectly calm and resigned at the last moment. He had prepared himself fully for death, as if like an actor he had been rehearsing it. He parted with his life, the most precious thing for one to possess, as if it mattered nothing to nim.

11. **Art**—skill

12. **To find the mind's construction in the face**—to read the thoughts in the face.

13-14. **He was a gentleman on whom.....trust**—the latter thane of Cawdor was a man on whom I placed absolute confidence.

11-14. **There's no art.....trust**—too innocent and unsuspecting as Duncan is, he is going to repeat his mistake. Note

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the admirable dramatic irony in Duncan's remark. While he makes this pregnant remark, he is unconscious that what was true of Cawdor, might as well be true of another man, for example Macbeth.

14. **O worthiest cousin**—Duncan seems to be bursting with his feeling of gratitude. His first cry—Oh worthiest cousin !—seems to sum up a heart full of gratitude.

15-16. **The sin of my ingratitude.....me**—knowing as I do that no reward, however great, can be an adequate return for your services to me. I was reproaching myself with ingratitude. **The sin of my ingratitude**—while Duncan reproaches himself with ingratitude, ingratitude is breeding in Macbeth's heart. Soon the sin of ingratitude will lie heavy on Macbeth. **Thou art so far before**—your services are so far ahead of my reward.

17-18. **That swiftest wing.....thee**—that however fast reward may move to catch you, it is too slow to overtake you. The idea is that Macbeth is so far ahead in his services to the king that whatever reward the king may choose to offer him, will be too inadequate a return, and will fall far short of his merits. **Would thou hadst less deserved**—I wish you had deserved less so that my reward of your services would have been more adequate.

19-20. **That the proportion.....mine**—so that thanks and rewards that I might have made, had been well adjusted to your services. Another interpretation is that the ratio of thanks and rewards to services and deserts might have been in my favour. **Only I have left to say**—the only thing left to me to say in these circumstances is that.

21. **More is thy due than more than all can pay**—what is due to you is more than if I exceed my power paying you. So high are your deserts that they cannot be adequately rewarded, even if all rewards were exhausted on you ; even if I could do what it was beyond my powers to do.

22-23. **The service and the loyalty I owe.....pays itself**—it is my duty to serve you, and it is my sufficient reward when I serve you. Macbeth means to say that his service and loyalty look to no other reward than the privilege of service and loyalty.

23-24. **Your highness' part...our duties**—it is for your highness to receive our services. **Duties**—explained by Hudson as faculties and labour of duty.

25. **Throne and state**—kingly majesty. Figure of *Hendiadys*. **Are to your throne.....servants**—we stand in the same relation to your majesty as children do to their parents and servants to their masters. Our duty is to obey and serve you.

26. **Which**—who. **Do.....should**—do no more than their bare duty.

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27. **Safe toward your love and honour**—in the interest of your love and honour, or with regard to the safety of your love and honour. Macbeth refers to his subjugating Macdonwald and repelling the invasion of Sweno, which endangered the throne of the king, and might have robbed him of the love of his subjects and the honour due to him as king. In this speech it may be noted how Macbeth's insincerity which is expressed in stilted rhetoric, contrasts with the king's frankness and spontaneous kindness of heart.

28. **Plant thee**—lay the foundation of your greatness.

29. **Make thee full of growing**—see to it that you attend the full stature of your greatness.

N. B. "More irony. It is watered by Duncan's blood that Macbeth will grow."—*Grierson.*

30. **That hast.....deserved**—you have deserved as much as Macbeth.

30-31. **Nor must be known.....so**—the public recognition of your services will be as great as that of Macbeth's. **Infold**—embrace.

32. **There if I grow**—if I thrive on the affection of your heart.

33. **The harvest is your own**—the full ripeness of services that will result from your favour, belong to you. **Plenteous**—abundant.

34. **Wanton**—luxuriant.

34-35. **Seek to hide themselves.....sorrow**—excess of joy sometimes expresses itself in tears.

36. **Whose places are the nearest**—who are nearest to me in relationship or rank.

37. **Establish our estate upon**—settle the succession to the throne upon.

N. B. Scotland was at this time an elective monarchy : succession to the throne was by election, not heredity. When this election took place in the lifetime of a king, the heir-apparent was given the title of Prince of Cumberland—a title which corresponds to the modern Prince of Wales.

39. **Prince of Cumberland**—Cumberland at the time included the countries of Cumberland, Westmoreland and Northern Strathclyde.

40. **Not unaccompanied**—with corresponding distribution of hours among the courtiers.

41. **Signs**—insignia. **Nobleness**—nobility. **Shine**—shed lustre.

42. **All deservers**—those courtiers who deserve such honour.

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39-42. (*Explanation*). **Which honour must not unaccompanied deservers**—While Duncan gives Malocim the title of Prince of Cumberland, he promises to distribute honours among those of his courtiers who deserve. Titles of dignity will be conferred on them, and they will be distinguished by these honours which will shine like stars. **From hence to Inverness**—let us depart from here to Inverness. **Inverness**—the seat of Macbeth' s castle. It is the country-town of Invernesshire and was made the seat of royal castle by Macbeth Canmore.

43. **Bind us further to you**—lay me under deeper obligation by being my host.

44. **The rest is labour, which is not used for you**—even the rest which is mine, but which is not used in your service, is but irksome to me. Macbeth's hypocrisy is patent in this speech.

45. **Harbinger**—the word is used in its technical sense. A 'harbinger' was an officer of royal household whose duty was to mark and allot, in advance lodgings for the king and his retinue whenever they are expected to arrive at any place. Here of course it means a forerunner. **Make joyful**—gladden.

46. **Approach**—news of your coming visit to our castle.

47. **My worthy Cawdor**—more dramatic irony, since the new thane of Cawdor will prove a worse traitor than the late thane of Cawdor.

48-50. **That is a step on which.....lies**—the proclamation of Malcolm as Prince of Cumberland will either bar me out from the throne (if I take it lying down), or else make me put him out of my way. Either I shall have to submit to it, or I must get round it for it is a stumbling block in my path-way.

N. B. Macbeth no more wants to leave things to chance. His wavering is gone. He makes up his mind at once to take the initiative in the matter of the fulfilment of the last prediction of the Witches. Here Shakespeare seems to take up Holinshed's motive. Shakespeare does not, however, make much of this. So Grierson says, "The objective reasons for his conduct are of only incidental importance beside the internal forces that have been let loose."

50. **Hide your fires**—put out your light ; cease to shine. Macbeth is fully conscious of the enormity of the crime. He is conscious too that the stars will be ashamed of such a deed and hide their fire. He already warns the stars to take no notice of it.

51. **Let not light.....desires**—let not my murderous thoughts be revealed to daylight.

52. **The eye wink at the hand**—let my eye close itself so that it may not see what my hand will be doing. In these words Macbeth only expresses his natural shrinking from bloodshed in a crime. **Yet let that be**—yet let this be fulfilled.

53. **Which the eye fears**—which the eye blinks in gazing at.

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55. **In his commendations I am fed**—the praises that are sung of him are a feast to me.

56. **Let's after him**—the verb of motion is omitted.

57. **Whose care**—who being anxious about my comforts. Ironically it refers to the care which weighs upon Macbeth's spirits, for preparing to carry out the plan of murder.

58. **Peerless**—of unequalled worth.

ACT I : SCENE V

Analysis. Lady Macbeth reads the letter that her husband has sent her. Macbeth gives all the details of his meeting with the Witches how the first two prophecies. He also informs Lady Macbeth how the first two prophecies have been already fulfilled. It is the last prophecy of the two Witches, which Macbeth particularly commends to his wife. Lady Macbeth at once makes up her mind that her husband shall be what has been predicted of him, Glamis and Cawdor as he is already. But she doubts very much whether her husband has the nerve to seize the shortest way to his ambition. She knows that her husband is ambitious, but shrinks from unscrupulous means for attaining his ambition. Let her husband come, and she will infuse her spirit into him, and incite his manhood with the eloquence of her tongue. He must not forego the crown which fate and metaphysical aid seem to place in his hands.

Then enters a manager. He tells Lady Macbeth that the king is coming there as her guest that very night. At first it seems to be incredible to Lady Macbeth. If the king had been coming, her husband would have certainly informed her. The messenger repeats the news, and adds that his master is coming behind while one of his attendants ran ahead of him to deliver his message. Lady Macbeth sends the messenger to take good care of the fellow who has brought the news. Here is the great opportunity of executing the ambitious plan of her husband. Lady Macbeth invokes the spirits that move human thoughts to unsex her ; to fill her with cruelty from top to toe, to exclude all pity so that her stern purpose may not be shaken by any scruples. She calls upon night to come and to cover in hellish darkness the crime that will be committed by her knife and prevent heaven from warning her.

Then enters Macbeth. Lady Macbeth hails him as Glamis and Cawdor, and also with the title of the greater honour which is to come later. She seems to be carried beyond the present, and already lives in the future. In great glee of heart Macbeth tells her that Duncan is coming to be their guest. When Macbeth says that the king proposes to leave next day, Lady Macbeth replies that next day will never come. She warns him to assume a look of absolute

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innocence. He who is coming must be dealt with. This business Lady Macbeth begs her husband to entrust to her, for it is going to give them sovereignty for the days to come. Macbeth would rather talk over the matter later. But in the meantime Lady Macbeth cautions him to keep a steady countenance, not to betray by look or manner of his design. She herself is prepared to carry out the task.

Critical Note. There is an implied contract between Lady Macbeth and her husband. She has nothing to do with any moral scruple. If ambition seems to stir Macbeth, in Lady Macbeth it is the ruling passion. But Lady Macbeth is not an unwomanly woman —she has soft and tender graces of womanhood. She sacrifices her womanhood to ambition. But her love for Macbeth is greater than her ambition. Her ambition is not for herself, but for her husband. She is so different from Macbeth because her conscience is defunct. It should also be noted that Lady Macbeth serves as an ally of the Witches—she throws herself in the scale of "fate and metaphysical aid," which would, after all, have Macbeth crowned. We see how excited Lady Macbeth gets by the news of the coming of the king :

> "Thy letters have transported me beyond
> This ignorant present, and I feel now
> The future in the instant."

Notes and Explanations

STAGE DIRECTION. **Reading a letter**—it is suggested that Lady Macbeth is here re-reading the last line of her husband's letter. We may assume that she enters the stage when she has read part of the letter. Macbeth himself had written this letter after he met the Witches and before he came to Duncan's place, for he does not say anything about Malcolm's nomination as heirapparent.

1. **They**--witches. **In the day of success**—on the day of victory.

2. **By the perfectest report**—(i) by the sure test of subsequent event : (ii) on unimpeachable testimony.

2-3. **They have more in them than mortal knowledge**—they know more than human-beings ; they can foresee the future.

3-4. **Burned in desire**—was eager. **Question them further**—put to them more questions. **Made themselves air**—melted into the air.

5. **Rapt in the wonder of it**—lost in myself, wondering at all that happened. **Missives**—messengers.

6. **All-hailed**—greeted.

7-8. **Referred me.....time**—dire ed my thoughts to dwell on the high destiny that waits me in the future.

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9. **Deliver**—communicate to. **My dearest partner**—this shows perfect sympathy between husband and wife.

10. **Lose the dues of rejoicing**—be deprived of your legitimate right to share in my joyful anticipation.

11. **What greatness is promised thee**—prospect of becoming queen.

12. **Lay it to thy heart**—cherish it in your heart.

14. **What thou are promised**—what has been predicted of you by the Witches. **Fear thy nature**—mistrust your disposition.

15. **Milk of human kindness**—the weak and sentimental compassion which is so characteristic of kindly people. There is a touch of scorn in the phrase.

16. **Catch the nearest way**—seize the most direct and, therefore, the most unscrupulous way to the throne.

14-16. **Yet do I fear thy nature... nearest way**—Lady Macbeth gives her own estimate of her husband's character. She has little faith in him. He is too human-hearted. He is not without moral scruples and he will be most unwilling to take the easiest way to the realisation of his ambition. It will be a hard job to persuade him to do what is necessary to win the crown. **Thou wouldst be great**—you wished to be great.

17-18. **Without the illness should attened it**—without the unfair means or unscrupulousness which should go with ambition. Ambition should have nothing to do with moral scruples. **What thou wouldst highly**—what is desired most strongly by you.

19. **That wouldst thou holily**—*i.e.*, you wish to attain your ambition by fair means. **Play false**—be a traitor.

20. **Yet wouldst wrongly win**—yet you do not mind usurping the throne which does not belong to you. The idea is : You cherish high ambition : You aspire to the throne : Even you do harbour murderous thoughts : Yet you would like to gratify the criminal ambition without soiling your hands with crimes.

21. **That which cries**—*i.e.*, the throne. **Thus thou must do, if thou have it**—you cannot get away from murder if you would have the crown.

22. **That which rather thou dost fear to do**—the murder of Duncan from which you shrink.

23. **Than wishest should be undone**—you wish you might get the crown without attempting murder.

N. B. The point is this : Macbeth has ambition but he would not adopt the means necessary to realise it. He aspires to the crown, but he seems to forget that the crown could be had by means of murdering the king. Macbeth would rather not shed Duncan's

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blood. He would have been glad if Duncan had been out of the way. He is afraid of committing the murder himself. He would like to profit by the result, but dreads the act which alone can bring about that result. Other interpretations of the line have been offered :—(1) Delius takes 'that' in *line 21* to refer to the cold-blooded instinct of murder which Macbeth might have possessed.' (2) Verity takes 'have' in *line 20* to be an example of zeugma, meaning 'like to possess' with its first object (the 'that' of *line 21*), and like to see it done with its second object (the 'that' of *line 22*). He takes 'it' in *line 21* to 'what you desire : your object'. He paraphrases :—You would like, great Glamis, the thing (*i. e.*, the crown) which as it appears cries out : "This is what you must do (*i e.*, murder Duncan) if you are to get what you desire (it)" and you would like the dead (*i. e.*, the murder) which you fear to do yourself but which, if it were done you would not wish undone. (3) Some take 'that' in *line 21* to refer to Duncan's murder and 'it' to refer to the crown ; but this inverts the whole thought. (4) An ingenious interpretation is by R. F. Cholmley. He explains 'that' in *line 21* to refer to 'virtue which demands that no wrong should be done in any circumstances : and takes the 'that' in the next line to refer to Duncan's removal. Lady Macbeth is harping upon the inconsistency of her husband's character and ends, as she began, by saying : "You want to satisfy your conscience and your ambition at the same time."

Hie thee—hasten.

24. **That**—so that. **I may pour my spirits in thine ear**—infuse into you my dashing spirit.

25. **Chastise**—drive away. **Valour of my tongue**—spirited words of advice and encouragement.

26. **All that impedes thee**—the scruples, fears and fancies which hold you back from. **The golden round**—crown.

27. **Metaphysical aid**—supernatural assistance. Refers to the predictions of the Witches. **Doth Seem**—the verb is singular because 'fate' and 'metaphysical aid' form one idea.

27-28. **Doth seem to have thee Crown'd withal**—"doth look as if meaning to have thee crowned with."—Grierson. **Withal**—an emphatic form of 'with'. Used at the end of a sentence or clause especially when the object is a relative pronoun. **Tidings**—news.

29. **Thou 'rt made to say it**—the message seems to be incredible to Lady Macbeth. To Lady Macbeth, who has already resolved on the murder of Duncan, the news is too good to be true. She breaks into a startled a statement and instantly remembering that her words might be misinterpreted, tries to cover it up. From potential murderess, she promptly turns hostess.

40. **Thy master**—Macbeth. **Were's so**—if it had been true.

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31. **Inform'd for preparation**—sent me information beforehand so that I might prepare for the welcome of the king.

32. **So please you**—if it may please you.

33. **Fellows**—fellow-messengers. **Had the speed of him**—outrode him.

34. **Dead for breath**—faint for want of breath.

34-35. **Had scarcely more...make up his message**—could hardly command his voice to deliver the message. **Give him tending**—attend to his wants ; see that he gets what he requires.

36. **Great news**—(1) news most welcome because it is a great honour to have the king as one's guest. That is the sense in which the messenger understands the words. (2) The most fortunate news because it affords an opportunity for murdering the king. It is the sense in which the speakers and the audience understand the words. **The raven himself is hoarse**—the raven is a bird of ill omen ; its voice is hoarse. The cry of the raven presages the murder of the king. Darmasteter explains : "To her imagination haunted with murder, the hoarse voice of the messenger is the cry of the raven announcing Duncan's death."

37. **Croaks**—announces by its hoarse voice. **Fatal entrance**—the arrival that will end fatally or in death.

38. **Battlements**—parapets ; here used for the roof.

38-39. **You spirits that tend on mortal thoughts**—Lady Macbeth invokes the evil spirits that wait upon murderous thoughts. **Unsex me here**—deprive me of all tender womanly feelings.

40. **From the crown to the toe**—from head to foot. **Top-full** full to the brim.

41. **Of**—with. **Direst**—most terrible. **Make thick my blood**—blunt my sensibilities.

N. B. In the physiology of Shakespeare's day, 'natural spirits' ran in the blood along the veins to the liver, and 'animal spirits' along the arteries to the heart. The idea is that if the blood is thick, the pulse will beat more feebly, and sensitiveness will be diminished ; so that the sense of the crime she is meditating will, be less keen.

42. **Stop up**—block. **Access**—path. **Remorse**—pity ; compassion.

43. **Compunctious visitings of nature**—the natural instinct of tender feeling of repentance.

44. **Shake**—weaken. **Fell**—cruel.

44-45. **Keep peace between the effect and it**—mediate between the execution of the purpose and the purpose itself.

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38-45. (*Explanation*). **Come, you spirits.....effect and it**—Lady Macbeth invokes here the evil spirits that wait upon murderous thoughts. Let them make her forget the tender womanly feelings that reside in her breast ; let them saturate her with cruelty. Let her blood be thickened so that her sensibilities may be deadened. Let no compassion find its way to her heart. Let her have nothing to do with pricks of conscience that may arise in her nature spontaneously. She would not have her conscience enfeeble her stern purpose or mediate between its execution and itself. She would rather have all opposition removed from the pathway of her murderous designs.

46. **Take my milk for gall**—let gall *i. e.*, bile typifying bitterness of hatred be substituted for milk. **Murdering ministers**—instruments or agents of murder.

47. **In your sightless substances**—invisible as you are in your essence.

48. **Wait on nature's mischief**—(1) the evil that is inherent in the world ; (2) the destruction which nature brings about in her normal course ; (3) the destruction wrought by some visitation of nature ; (4) "the mischief done to nature, the violation of nature order committed by weakness."—*Johnson*. **Thick**—dense.

49. **Pall thee**—envelop yourself. **Dunnest**—murkiest.

50. **That**—so that. **Keen knife**—sharp-edged knife. **See not the wound it makes**—may not see the wound it inflicts.

51. **Nor heaven peep**—nor may heaven peep. **Blanket of the dark**—the darkness in which night covers the world.

N. B. In her excitement Lady Macbeth breaks out into a homely, but very vivid, very pertinent and very forceful expression. The idea is that crime would be too vile for even one ray of light to shine on. Let it be noted that the metaphor used is of the stage. *A pall and a knife* were among the usual properties of the tragic actor ; and even 'blanket' might have been suggested by the coarse, woollen curtain of Shakespeare's own theatre.

52. **To cry "Hold, hold"**—to restrain me from committing the murder. **Great Glamis**—as soon as Lady Macbeth beholds her husband, her heart leaps into her mouth. Yet what depth of affection in the cry—'great Glamis'—that seems to envelop Macbeth !

53. **Greater than both**—once Lady Macbeth projects herself into the future when her husband will be the very king himself. **By**—by virtue of. **The all-hail hereafter**—that part of the Witches' prophecy which remains to be fulfilled. **All-hail**—kingly tittle.

54. **Transported**—carried.

55. **Ignorant present**—the present time which is unaware of the coming glory.

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55-56 **I feel now the future in the instant**—the present is gone and I already live in the future. In her vivid imagination Lady Macbeth sees her husband already crowned king.

56-57. **My dearest love.....here to-night**—Macbeth charged with the tragic significance of the visit of the king, announces it in a solemn tone.

57. **And when goes hence**—and when does he leave our castle ?

58. **Purposes**—intends.

58-59. **O' never shall sun.....see**—the morning in which Duncan will leave our home alive, may never dawn.

60-61. **Your face, my thane.....strange matters**—Lady Macbeth, with the instinct of a loving wife, at once notices the wild and distracted look of her husband, and she is afraid that it may give away the whole show. **Is as a book.....matters**—is like an open book, where men may read strange things. Macbeth has a tell-tale face. Lady Macbeth warns him so that his face may not betray the crime, harboured in his thought. **Beguile the time**—hoodwink the observers.

62. **Look like the time**—bear yourself in a composed manner so that no one can suspect your inmost thought. **Bear welcome in your eye**—let your eye bear welcome to the king.

63. **Your hand, your tongue**—let your words and your behaviour radiate elcome to the king.

63-64. **Look like the innocent flower.....serpent under't**—harbour your murderous thought under the mask of innocence. A serpent may lie concealed among harmless flowers. Macbeth should have the look of the harmless flowers, but act like the serpent hidden in them. So in *Romeo and Juliet* Shakespeare speaks of, "Serpent-heart hid with a flowering face."

60-64. (*Explanation*). **Your face, my thane...serpent under't**—Lady Macbeth is warning her husband not to betray his thought in his face. As she looks at his face, it is wild and distracted ; it is like an open book in which a man may read whatever is there. Let Macbeth be on his guard and do not give the show away. Let not the observers suspect what is in his mind. He should wear a perpetual smile of welcome to his guests. Let his eyes, his hands and his tongue radiate welcome. Let him act like the serpent, hidden among beautiful flowers. In any case the agitation of his mind must not betray itself either in his face, or in his behaviour. He should be very cautious, and play the genial host, never letting the king or his guests suspect what is passing within his mind.

65. **Provided for**—a euphemism for murder. Lady Macbeth is wicked enough to plan a cold-blooded murder but she cannot help

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mincing words. **You shall put**—note Lady Macbeth's dictatorial tone. She offers to take the initiative into her own hands. She cannot trust her husband's nature, which is weak, wavering and irresolute.

66. **This night's great business**—another euphemism. The great business is nothing but the murder of the king, which will clear the way for Macbeth to the throne. **Dispatch**—conduct ; management.

67. **To all our nights and days to come**—to our future.

68. **Solely**—absolutely. **Sovereign sway**—the power of a king. **Masterdom**—absolute authority.

69. **We will speak further**—Macbeth has not yet been able to conquer his hesitation. His nerves are still jumpy. He would rather postpone discussion of the murder. **Look up clear**—Let your face be clear of any shadow of worry and tension.

70. **To alter favour ever is to fear**—to change one's countenance is always a sure sign that one is afraid ; "if you change your countenance thus, your fears will not fail to be known." **Favour**—face.

71. **Leave all the rest to me**—let me take the initiative in the matter.

Act I : Scene VI

Analysis. Duncan has already arrived at Macbeth's castle. He admires the castle itself, and the bracing air that blows about it. Banquo points to the king the nests of the martins—a further proof of the pleasant and genial air. The martins have built nests wherever they have got a convenient place in the castle.

Next enter Lady Macbeth. Duncan graciously addresses her, and excuses himself for the trouble he is giving his hostess, though he knows that this trouble is quite welcome to her. Lady Macbeth apologises for the shortcomings of the service rendered to the king—services even done twice over would hardly be equivalent to the honours and dignities that had been conferred upon Macbeth. The king is eager to meet his host, who started ahead of him. Lady Macbeth again apologises profusely for the favour done by the king to her husband. The king desires to be led to his host.

Critical Note—Though a short scene, it is charged with the deepest tragic significance. The dialogue between the King and Banquo, with which the scene opens, hardly dispels the shuddering impression of the previous scene—hatching of the plot to murder the innocent and unsuspecting Duncan. The suggestion of repose in the beginning of the scene is rather poignant, for as a matter of fact events are moving rapidly towards a tragedy. The dramatic irony seems to be overcharegd.

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"The lyrical movement with which this scene opens, and the free and unengaged mind of Banquo form a highly dramatic contrast with the laboured rhythm and hypocritical over much of Lady Macbeth's welcome."—*Coleridge.*

Notes and Explanations

STAGE DIRECTION. **Hautboys**—a wooden double-reed musical instrument like a flute with a very high pitch. Let it be noted that the time is evening of the summer day ; and though it is dark enough to require torches, but not so dark that the scenery cannot be admired.

1. **Hath a pleasant seat**—it situated in the midst of charming scenery. **Seat**—site.

2. **Nimbly**—briskly. **Sweetly**—with its delicate fragrance. **Recommends itself**—feels pleasant.

3. **Gentle senses**—senses soothed by the air. Johnson explains 'gentle' as placid and composed. The air that blows briskly is mild, bracing and delicately fragrant. The senses of the guests are soothed by it. **Guest of summer**—the martlet comes to England in early summer and leaves in the middle of October.

4. **Temple-haunting marlet**—the house-martin, a king of swallow, builds its nests under the projecting eaves of churches where they are generally undisturbed. **Approve**—prove.

5. **By his loved mansionry**—by means of the fact that he loves to build his nest here every year. 'The house-martin or martlet will breed on for several years together in the same nest."—*White Selborne.* **Mansionary**—abode. **Heaven's breath**—air.

6. **Smells wooingly**—is as sweet in its perfume as a lover in his conduct towards his sweetheart ; has a caressing sweetness of fragrance. **Hence**—in this locality. **Jutty**—the part of a wall or building projecting forwards. **Frieze**—the middle portion of an entablature, *i.e.*, the super structure of a column. This is generally a flat band between the architrave below and the cornice above.

7. **Buttress**—a mass of masonry built up against a wall to resist the pressure of a roof to vault, or otherwise strengthen the building. **Coign of vantage**—convenient projecting corner. **But**—where not.

8. **Pendent**—overcharging. **Bed**—nest where it sleeps. **Procreant cradle**—place where it lays its eggs.

9. **Haunt**—resort.

10. **Delicate**—delightful. **See, see our honour'd hostess**—Duncan is enraptured at the sight of his hostess, Lady Macbeth. The innocent unsuspecting Duncan apologises to his hostess for the trouble he is causing to her. He shows himself to be too gentle too gracious, too harmless. All the time Lady Macbeth has been

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harbouring murderous designs in her heart. The dramatic irony here is most poignant.

11. **The love that follows us sometime is our trouble**—(1) "the love that follows us sometimes gives us trouble, but notwithstanding we still thank you for it as being loved. In this respect I teach you how you will be able to thank us for giving you trouble by showing you similar love !"—*Cunningham.* (2) "The affection which urges us to desire the society of our friends is sometimes the occasion of trouble to them ; but still we feel grateful for the affection which is manifested. So you are to regard this visit ; and with this view of it you will be disposed to thank us for the trouble which we occasion you. "—*Hunter.* **Follow**—attends upon. **Sometimes**—sometimes. **Our trouble**—as source of annoyance to us ; or the trouble that we inflict on others.

12. **Thank as love**—thank this trouble as it proceeds from love.

13. **'ild us**—reward us. **For your pains**—for the trouble that I give you.

14. **All our service**—all services that my husband renders to you, or can render in future.

15. **In every point**—in every item. **Then done double**—*i.e.*, four times done over.

16. **Were**—would be. **Poor**—inadequate. **Single**—as opposed to services done twice over. **Business**—affair. **Contend**—vie with.

17. **Deep and broad**—numerous and extensive.

18. **Loads our house**—bestows upon our family. **Those of old**—those honours which were formerly bestowed upon us.

19. **Late dignities**—titles of dignity lately conferred. **Heap'd up to them**—added to the old honours.

20. **We rest your hermits**—we are deeply indebted to you and it is our duty to pray for your happiness. **Hermits**—beadsmen, persons depending on another's charity and bound to pray for his welfare. **Where's the thane of Cawdor**—Macbeth has not appeared because he has not been able to compose his feature sufficiently. He is still in a nervous tension.

21. **Coursed**—chased. **Purpose**—intension.

22. **Purveyor**—domestic officer who provides lodging and necessary things in advance for a great personage ; here a forerunner. **He rides well**—he rides too fast.

23. **His great love, sharp as his spur**—his love for me must have been as great an incentive to him as his spur had been active in urging his horse. **Holp**—helped. The verb was originally a strong one, and formed its past tense by means of a vowel change.

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25. **We**—the royal plural. **Your servants**—your objects.

26. **Theirs**—their servants. **What is theirs**—all that belongs to them. **In compt**—accountable.

27. **Make their audit**—submit a full statement of accounts. **At your highness' pleasure**—whenever your majesty pleases.

28. **Still**—ever. **Return your own**—return all that we possess, because it is yours.

25-28. (*Explanation*). **Your servants.....return your own**—Lady Macbeth professes hypocritical loyalty to the king. Herself and her husband are but his subjects. They have their servants, themselves and all that belongs to them on trust from the king. They are bound to render an account of everything to the king whenever he desires. But whatever is theirs, belongs to the king. In rendering an account they will be simply returning what really belongs to the king.

29. **Conduct**—lead. **Love him highly**—Duncan can never be satisfied until he can proclaim his love for Macbeth.

30. **Graces**—acts of favour.

31. **By your leave**—with your permission. A formula of courtesy. Duncan offers his hand to Lady Macbeth and leads her in.

Act I : Scene VII

Analysis. We meet Macbeth now. He is all by himself. In a soliloquy he reviews the situation. He cannot shut his eyes to the consequence of the crime. If the crime had left no trail behind, there could be little hesitation in doing the thing. If there were no hereafter, if the crime and its result were but limited to the duration of life on earth, Macbeth would easily run the risk. But what deters him is the fact that even in this life retribution follows upon crime. The crime itself will recoil upon the head of the criminal. Nor can he forget that king is here in double trust ; first as his kinsman and subject, he owes loyalty to him ; secondly, as his host, it is his duty to protect him against his murderer. Further, Duncan as a king has been so gentle and so innocent in exercise of power that his virtues will arm themselves against his murder, and pity itself will denounce the crime to the world. I have little desire to proceed in the matter, but my immoderate ambition.

At this moment enters Lady Macbeth. It appears that Macbeth has run away as soon as the king has supped. He has not the nerve to do the murder, and tells his wife that he will proceed on further in this business. Nor can he risk the esteem he has won of all people. Lady Macbeth chides her husband. Why did he cherish the hope in his sober sense then ? She can hardly value his love for her. Is he not already a murderer in desire ? He is only

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afraid to do what he wishes in his heart. He simply gives way to his weak nerves. He desires the crown with all his heart, and yet he has not the courage to ake the step to make it his own. When Macbeth is charged with cowardice, he retorts that he dares do all that may become a man, and he who dares do more is anything but a man. But why did he breathe of this enterprise to her, if he did not mean it seriously and if he had not the courage of a man to undertake it. At the time when he conceived this design, neither time nor place was favourable. Now he is backing out when both time and place invite him to the enterprise. She cannot forgive him for wavering in his purpose. As woman she knows how tenderly she loves the infant that sucks her, but she would have dashed out its brains, while it was smiling in her face, if she had resolved like her husband. Macbeth is still afraid of what would happen if they failed. But Lady Macbeth cannot entertain the thought of failure. Let her husband screw his courage to the sticking place and they cannot fail. She points out to him how easy the whole thing is. Duncan would be sound asleep after the fatigue of the journey. She can stupefy his two chamberlains with wine so that they will be in a death-like slumber. Is it not then easy to dispatch Duncan ? And then the blame can be easily shifted to his attendants. Macbeth readily jumps up with his wife's suggestion. He admires her spirit. And he supplements her suggestion with the one that they will use the very daggers, owned by the king's attendants, and leave them stained with blood. Then when it transpires they have done it, none will have the dare to contradict it. Lady Macbeth lends support to her husband's plan. Macbeth now makes up his mind to do the murder ; and he will never let the evil of his heart paint his face.

Critical Note. The scene opens with Macbeth's soliloquy. His imagination seems to be suspended for a while, while his intellect rules him. Intellect is passionless. Macbeth analyses the consequences of murder. It should be noted that he has become partially used to the image of murder, which does not make him shudder now as it did before. All that he is afraid of at present is the retribution of the crime—the Nemesis haunting the evil-doer. Not that his moral scruples have been totally overcome. But he seems to be now in a position to silence the voice of his conscience. Ambition is uppermost in him, and seems to blunt his moral sensibilities. If he is still wavering, Lady Macbeth chides it away with the valour of her tongue.

Notes and Explanations

STAGE DIRECTION. Sewer—the head waiter, who directed the setting of the dishes of the table and brought water for the guests to wash their hands with ; originally, the person who tasted the dishes in order to prove that there was no poison in them.

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Service—articles placed on the table before a meal, for example, salt, bread, cloth, trenchers etc.

N. B. The time is only a few hours later than the previous scene. The hautboys and torches are vivid touches which bring the sense of banquetting before the mind.

1. **If it were done when 'tis done**—if Duncan's murder had left no trail behind it. **Done**—done with : ended once for all. **When 'tis done**—when the murder is committed. **'Twere well**—it would be well.

2. **It were done quickly**—if Duncan's murder led to no dreadful consequences, if it did not invite retribution, then the sooner it was done, the better.

3. **Trammel up**—completely arrest. **The consequence**—the retribution which will follow the crime. **Catch**—attain.

4. **With his surcease**—with its cessation. 'Surcease' is a legal word denoting the stay of proceedings in a suit. **His Surcease**—'his' is used for its, and then it will mean the cessation of the act of murder. 'His' may also refer to Duncan, then it means Duncan's death. **Success**—realisation of the object aimed at.—Some explain it as sequel, and 'catch success' then repeats the idea of trammel up the consequences. **That**—if. **This blow**—this single act of assassination.

5. **Might be the be-all and the end-all here**—might be the final issue here on earth.

6. **Upon this bank and shoal of time**—on the shore of this earthly existence—the short span of life which faces an endless future after death.

7. **Jump the life to come**—stake the life after death, the future world.

1-7. (*Explanation*). **If it were done when 'tis done...to come**—in his soliloquy Macbeth reviews the consequences of the act of murder. If murder of the king would give rise to no further complications, once it was done, Macbeth would have no hesitation to carry it through. But every crime is followed by punishment. If the act of murder could swallow up the consequence (the punishment of the crime) and secure that object for which it was done, Macbeth would not have been deterred by moral scruples. But he knows that a crime cannot be killed—it rather moves in a vicious circle, and perpetuates itself in a series of complications; which he cannot but dread. If the murder of Duncan were but to end here on earth, if it would drag after it no further tragic consequences, Macbeth would be prepared to stake the life after death to secure the object of his ambition in this life. Macbeth now dreads the material consequences of Duncan's murder, for example,

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the danger that the crown which he may wear by murdering Duncan may be snatched away from him. For the time Macbeth forgets the haunting terror of conscience that will give him no peace of mind.

8. **We still have judgement here**—we cannot escape punishment even in our earthly life. **That**—in that.

8-9. **Teach bloody instructions**—set an example to others who may deal with us in the same way.

9-10. **Return to plague the inventor**—recoil on the head of the evil-doer.

8-10. **That we but teach bloody instructions..... inventor**—Macbeth is afraid of the material consequences of the murder of Duncan. He murders Duncan, and secures the crown, but his example may be followed by others, who may murder Macbeth and snatch away the crown. **Even-handed**—impartial. **Justice**—the law that crime is followed by punishment—the law of retribution.

11. **Commends**—recommends. **Ingredients**—components. **Poison'd chalice**—a cup of poison.

10-12. **This even handed justice commends.....lips**—the law of retribution makes those who would offer a cup of poison to others, drink it themselves. So the phrase in *Hamlet* is to hoist the engineer with his own pear. **He's here in double trust**—as a king to whom his allegiance is due, and as a guest whom he as host must protect at the cost of his own life.

13. **First, as I am his kinsman and his subject**—my first duty to him is the duty of his cousin and his subject.

14. **Strong both against the deed**—both these ties—the ties of kinsman and subject—deter me from the murder. **Then, as his host**—secondly I have the duty of a host towards him.

15-16. **Who should against his murderer...myself**—the duty of a host would be to protect him from the murderer, not to be the murderer himself. **Besides**—further.

17. **Hath borne his faculties so meek**—has exercised his kingly power so gently ; has been so kind and benevolent a ruler. **Faculties**—powers, prerogatives of office.

18. **So clear in his great office**—so wholly blameless in his conduct as king. **Clear**—irreproachable. **Great office**—the discharge of his duties as a king.

18-19. **That his virtues will plead like angels**—that his virtues will protect against his murder with the voice of angels. **Trumpet-tongued**—speaking as loudly and as clearly as a trumpet.

20. **The deep damnation of his taking-off**—the outrageous crime of murdering him. **Taking-off**—euphemism for murder.

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21. **Pity, like a naked new-born babe**—pity is personified here, and is called up in the image of a naked, new-born baby.

22. **Striding the blast**—riding astride the storm.

N. B. It may be an allusion to the Gaelic belief in "little spectres called *tarans* or the souls of unbaptised infants, often seen flitting among the woods and secret place, bewailing in soft voices their hard fate."

Cherubin—a winged angel-child. **Horsed**—mounted.

23. **Sightless couriers of the air**—the invisible runners of the air. "The one figure melts into the others, single child becomes a host of cherubim. The word should probably be 'cherubins.' 'He rode upon the cherubins, and did fly : He came flying upon the wings of the wind.'—Psalm, XVIII, 10 (Prayer Book). To the logical mind these last lines appear a whirl of mixed and extravagant metaphors, but this dramatic power as a revelation to the tempest in Macbeth's mind depends on this wildness. More 'correct' poetry would be less appropriate."—*Grierson.*

24. **Blow that horrid deed in every eye**—make the outrageous crime known to everybody in the world.

25. **That tears.....wind**—so that tears shall end the wind. "This image of shower of tears, in which the storm of passion expands itself, is very common in Shakespeare."—*Delius.*

16-25. (*Explanation*). **Besides, this Duncan hath borne his faculties...tears shall drown the wind**—Macbeth, in reviewing his attitude to the murder of Duncan, first notes his double duty to the king—duty as a kinsman and subject and duty as a host. Then he adds that Duncan on account of his meek and gentle nature cannot provoke any enmity. He has exercised kingly powers so gently, and has been so blameless in his conduct as king that his murder cannot go unavenged. His virtues will rise up in protest against it like angels, speaking through the trumpet. Pity, riding the gust of wind, like a naked new-born baby, or a cherub, mounted on the invisible runners of the air, shall make the outrageous crime known to everybody in the world, and tears shall come down like a shower of rain in which a storm exhausts itself.

25. **Spur**—the implement by which the horse is goaded ; here incentive.

26. **Prick the sides of my intent**—goad on my purpose.

27. **Vaulting ambition**—ambition that over-reaches itself. Here ambition is compared to a rider who leaps too high or too wide and misses the saddle.

27-28. **Vaulting ambition.....falls on the other**—Macbeth means that he is swept away by his measureless ambition, which may defeat its own purpose. It should be noted that he is now almost ready to sacrifice moral scruples to his ambition.

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29. **He has almost supp'd.....chamber**—Macbeth should have remained at the supper-table till his guests had risen, but he was so perturbed in spirit that he ran away.

31. **We will proceed no further in this business**—in his soliloquy with which the scene opens, Macbeth partially braces himself up to the crime, and in the meantime his moral scruples get the upper hand in him, and when he encounters Lady Macbeth again, who seems to be his evil genius, he breaks down. **This business**—the plot to murder Duncan.

32. **Of late**—lately. **Bought**—acquired.

33. **Golden opinions**—most favourable esteem.

34. **Which would be worn.....gloss**—which I desire to wear unstained.

35. **Cast aside**—discarded.

35-36. **Was the hope drunk.....yourself**—you nourished yourself with the hope of becoming king in place of Duncan ? Was the hope a passing fit of drunkenness ? **Hath it slept since**—the metaphor of drunkenness is continued as one sleeps off the effect of drunkenness.

37. **Wakes it now**—becomes sober. **Green**—sickly ; wan and livid complexion, such as may be noticed in a drunkard up from sleep after a night's debauch.

38. **At what it did so freely**—at what it planned and prepared for in its state of drunkenness.

35-38. (*Explanation*). **Was the hope drunk.....freely**—As soon as Macbeth encounters Lady Macbeth again, he collapses. He says that he will not proceed any further in this business of murdering the king. Lady Macbeth rebukes him. Why did he entertain the hope of becoming king in place of Duncan, if he did not mean it seriously ? Lady Macbeth compares his hope to a drunkard. As a drunkard shakes off his drunkenness after a sleep, so his hope must have gone to sleep and now wakes up sober, and begins to shudder at what it projected to carry out. Lady Macbeth implies that her husband was intoxicated with the hope of becoming a king, and that he has now become quite sober, and shudders from the crime which he contemplated in his exaltation.

39. **Such I account thy love**—I can no more trust your love than the hope with which you deluded me. Your love must be great in protestation, but poor in performance like the hope which you held out to me. **Afeard**—afraid.

40-41. **To be the same.....desire**—you desire to be the king, but you have not the courage to be in action what you desire.

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41-42. **Wouldst thou have that.....life**—do you still desire to possess the crown, which makes life worth living ?

43. **And**—and yet. **Live a coward in thine own esteem**—you desire to possess the crown, but you know that you have not the courage to take it, and so you will live a coward in your own opinion.

44. **I dare not**—cowardice. **Wait upon**—serve. **I would**—the desire to possess the crown.

45. **Adage**—proverb. **Like the poor cat i' the adage**—compare the proverb : the cat would eat fish, and would not wet her feet. **Prithee**—contraction of *Pray thee*. **Peace**—no more of it.

46. **I dare do all that may become a man**—the subtle distinction that Macbeth makes here is lost upon his wife. or she may ignore it. The distinction is between a manly, honest deed, and a crime. Macbeth means to say that he has courage to do manly and honest deeds. The courage which Lady Macbeth demands of him, is that courage for crime, which will reduce a man to beast.

47. **Who dares do more is none**—he who dares do more is no man.

47-48. **What beast was't then.....enterprise to me**—Lady Macbeth retorts by saying that Macbeth must have been a beast when he suggested this crime to her. **Break this enterprise**—disclose your plans of seizing the throne by murdering Duncan.

N. B. Lady Macbeth's logic is relentless. She has no sympathy with Macbeth's wavering. She accuses Macbeth of behaving like a drunkard, having toyed with hopes that he dares not face when the opportunity of realising them arises. She accuses him of being a self-convicted coward, one who fears his desires. She accuses him of going back upon his plan and trying to evade what he stands committed to even at the moment when this plan can be successfully executed. Finally she boasts that in similar circumstances she would have kept her promise, and dealt squarely with him.

49. **When you durst do it.....man**—Lady Macbeth controverts her husband's argument : Let him summon courage to do it, and he would prove himself a man.

50. **To be more than what you were**—to conquer your fears and scruples and to rise to the occasion. It has also been explained as to try to become a king instead of remaining a subject.

50-51. **You would be.....man**—you would prove yourself more the man in proportion to your courage. Lady Macbeth's sophistry is too subtle for her husband.

51-52. **Nor time nor place did then adhere**—nor time nor place was then suitable, or favoured your project. **Yet you would make both**—yet you were determined to make both time and place convenient to your purpose.

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53. **They have made themselves**—both time and place now invite you to the deed.

53-54. **That their fitness now does unmake you**—time and place are now suitable, and you break down.

55. **How tender't is to love.....me**—what the affection of a mother is for the baby that sucks her.

59. **While it was smiling in my face**—if Lady Macbeth is not boasting, her invocation to the spirits that tend on mortal thoughts to unsex her, seems to be partly successful.

57 **'Boneless**—toothless.

58. **Dash'd the brains out**—killed it by dashing its brains out. **Had I so sworn**—if I had made such a promise.

59. **To this**—to this enterprise.

54-59. **I have given suck.....done to this**—*N. B.* Some commentators see in this speech that Lady Macbeth is capable of motherly feeling. But the truth seems to be the other way round. This speech shows that Lady Macbeth understands little of motherly feeling. But this question seems to be pointless here. Lady Macbeth is no more than rhetorical in order to pursuade her husband to do the crime. Her ambition is still greater than her husbands. **If we should fail**—Macbeth does not now shudder at the image of murder, but is dismayed by the prospect of failure. His moral scruples have been partially overcome, but he is afraid of bungling and also of the retribution of the crime.

60. **Screw your courage to the sticking-place**—summon up your courage, and keep it constant until the work is done. **Sticking place**—place at which it will remain fixed ; level blow which it will not fall. The metaphor may be from (1) the screwing up of the cords of a string-instrument to the right pitch, where the pegs will keep it ; or (2) from screwing up the cord of a crossbow where a catch keeps it taut.

62-63. **Whereto the rather shall..... invite him**—and the fact that he had a tiresome ride during the day will induce him to sleep all the sooner. **Chamberlains**—bed-room attendants.

64. **Wassial**—carousing. **Convince**—stupefy ; overpower.

65. **Warder of the brain**—memory in which are stored up the secrets of man's mind. Memory prevents a man from forgetting his past impression and experiences, just as a jail-warder prevents convicts from escaping. In Shakespeare's time the brain was divided by physiologists into three ventricles, memory being placed in the lowest part, reason in the middle, and imagination at the top. So memory which stood at the junction of the brain and the spinal cord might be said to be a watchman guarding the secrets of the brain.

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66. **Shall be a fume**—shall disappear in a smoke or vapour. **The receipt of reason**—the receptacle of reason, that compartment of the brain in which the reasoning faculties are lodged.

67. **Limbec**—alembic *i. e.*, the cap of a steel through which the vapour passes before reaching the condenser.

65-67. **That memory.....limbeck only**—the idea is : the attendants will be so dead-drunk that they will neither remember nor understand what may happen during the night, even if they are accidentally roused from sleep. Both their memory and their reason will be suspended.

67. **Swinish sleep**—sleep as gross as that of hogs.

68. **Drenched**—stupefied.

70. **Unguarded Duncan**—because his attendants will lie in a death-like slumber. **Put upon**—impute to.

71. **Spongy**—drunken. **Bear the guilt**—be held guilty.

72. **Our great quell**—the deed of destruction done by us.

73. **Undaunted mettle**—indomitable courage. **Compose**—breed.

74-77. **Will it not be received.....done't**—we may make use of the very daggers of these two attendants and then stain their features with blood ; and people will not dare to contradict the report that they have done the murder.

77. **Other**—otherwise.

78. **As we shall mark...roar**—because we shall make a loud demonstration of our grief and indignation.

79. **I am settled**—I have made up my mind. **Bend up**—strain. The metaphor is from stringing a bow.

80. **Each corporal agent**—every faculty of the body ; each nerve and sinew. **This terrible feat**—this outrageous murder.

81. **Away**—go away. **Mock the time with fairest snow**—how deceive the people around you by assuming the most innocent looks.

82. **False face must hide.....know**—you must put on innocent appearance so that the guilty thoughts that are within your-mind, may not be betrayed in your face.

ACT II : SCENE I

Analysis. Banquo enters with his son, Fleance, while a servant bears a torch before them. It is later than twelve at night. Banquo hands his sword to Fleance. He is sleepy, yet he would not sleep ; for he is afraid of evil thoughts which emerge in sleep. Macbeth also enters, followed by a servant with a torch. Banquo arms himself with his sword, and asks who is there. He is sur-

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prised to see Macbeth still up. The king is in bed. He has been very much delighted with Macbeth's hospitality, and has distributed gifts among his servants. The king sends a diamond ring with Banquo for Lady Macbeth. Macbeth regrets that the reception of the king had been so defective.

Banquo hints that he dreamt of the three weird sisters last night. Macbeth is not prepared to talk over the matter at present, and postpones it for some future time, if it will suit Banquo. Macbeth promises to confer greater honour on Banquo. Banquo is ready to welcome it provided he has not to compromise his conscience and his allegiance to the king. So Banquo and Fleance take leave of Macbeth.

Macbeth dismisses his servant, bidding him go to his mistress and tell her to strike upon the bell when his drink is ready. When he is alone, he seems to see a phantom of a dagger before him, the handle towards his hand. It ever eludes his grasp, yet it is present before his eyes. It is not a fatal vision ? But he doubts whether it can be caught hold of. After all it may be a dagger of the mind, a creation of the heat-oppressed brain. It is still before his eyes, exactly like one he is carrying. The dagger seems to lead him the way he was going ; and it was such an instrument that he was to use. Either other senses play tricks upon his eyes, or his eyes seem to be more potent than other senses. The dagger is still before his eye, and now on its blade, there are spots of blood which were not there. Macbeth cannot believe that it is a real dagger, dangling before his eyes. It is rather a hallucination, called up the murder he is going to perpetrate. Now half the world is asleep, and wicked dreams press upon the sleeping sense ; witches now celebrate the worship of pale Hecate, and the gaunt murderer, summoned by his sentinel, the wolf, proceeds with his stealthy steps, like Tarquin, to the accomplishment of his design. Let not the stable and firm-set earth hear his steps, lest the very stones may betray his whereabout, and rob the persent hour of its horror. He feels at the same time how idle are his threats while the king lives. Now a bell rings. It is a summon to Macbeth. Let not Duncan hear it, for it is the death-bell which summons him either to heaven or to hell.

Critical Notes. The opening of the scene is pregnant with premonition. It is midnight, and the moon is down, and there is little light in the heavens. Banquo has not yet gone to bed. He meets Macbeth. It is strange that Macbeth should be up still. The unsuspecting king has gone to bed. Again there is the suggestion of dramatic irony, the king greets Lady Macbeth with a diamond ring on the very eve of his murder in which Lady Macbeth seems to be the greatest inciter. Banquo and Fleance take leave of Macbeth.

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Then follow the dagger-scene. Macbeth's imagination—which hardly differs from the imagination of a poet—is awake again. The murder, which he is going to commit, takes a material shape. But Macbeth appears to be far gone in his crime in thought. The horror of the murder no longer seems to repel him. It marks a great psychological change in Macbeth. The dagger-scene may be a hallucination, but the dramatic interest lies in that Macbeth rehearses the murder.

Notes and Explanations

STAGE DIRECTION. **Court of Macbeth's Castle**—The scene is the inner court of Macbeth's castle. Banquo is crossing it in order to get to the bed-room, set apart for him. "A large court, surrounded all or in part by open gallery ; chambers opening into that gallery ; the gallery ascended into by stairs, open likewise ; with addition of a college-like gateway, into which opens a porter's lodge, appears to have been the poet's idea of the place of this action."—*Capell.*

1. **How goes the night**—what hour of the night is it ?

2. **The moon is down**—people formerly kept in mind the hours of moonrise and moonset, as watches and clocks were not so common.

3. **I take't**—I suppose.

4. **Hold, take my sword**—Banbuo divests himself of his armour in preparation for sleep. **There's husbandry in heaven**—the heavens seem to be economical of light. **Husbandry**—thrifty management of a household.

5. **Their candles are all out**—the stars in the sky have all disappeared. **Thee**—ethic dative. **Take Thee that too**—Banquo hands Fleance another part of his armour : it may be a dagger or a helmet, or sword-belt, or a cloak.

6. **A heavy summons**—an irresistible call of sleep. **Lies like lead upon me**—weighs down my eyelids. Physically, Banquo was so fatigued that he needed sleep ; mentally he was so ill at ease that he could hardly bring himself to go to bed.

7. **Merciful powers**—heavenly powers (angels).

8-9. **Restrain in me the cursed thought.....repose**—put a stept to the wicked thoughts that visit me in my sleep, and which I am unable to resist. It appears that Banquo too is tempted by the prophecies of the witches. The subtle influence of the witches begins to work in his mind ; Banquo prays to be delivered from entertaining even in dreams the plans which Macbeth is plotting to execute. **Nature**—natural inclinations. **Give way**—yield. **In repose**—when I am asleep, my subconscious thoughts take shape in dreams. This is the reason why he would not sleep. **Give me my sword**—Banquo arms himself with his sword because he hears some one stirring.

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12. **What, sir, not yet at rest**—Banquo is surprised to see Macbeth still going about. **The king's a-bed**—the king has gone to sleep.

13. **He hath been in unusual pleasure**—he has enjoyed himself exceedingly ; he has been in a very happy mood.

14. **Great largess to your offices**—large sum of money to be distributed among your servants. **Largess**—money or gifts distributed on festive occasions. **Offices**—the servants, hall ; that part of the building which is allotted to the servants, namely, kitchen, pantry, cellar, servants' quarters, outhouses, etc.

15. **Diamond**—a diamond ring. **Greets**—honours. **Withal**—with.

16-17. **Shut up in measureless content**—(1) he is confined to a perfect satisfaction, a complete sense of peace ; (2) he concluded the day in perfect satisfaction, *i. e.*, retired to bed quite happy at the reception given him by her ; (3) "he summed up all that he had to say, in expressing his measureless content."—*Schmidt* ; (4) "he greets your wife by the name of "most kind hostess' and (greets her as one who is) shut up in measureless content, as one whose satisfaction is complete."—*Grierson.*

17. **Being unprepared**—as we had not timely notice of the coming of the king.

18. **Our will became the servant of defect**—we had to make the best of a bad job. **Will**—hospitable desires. **Became the servant to defect**—was incapable by our lack of resources.

19. **Which else**—our will otherwise. **Free**—freely. **Should free have wrought**—would have had free scope in making the necessary preparations. **All's well**—you need not worry, for the entertainment has been quite satisfactory.

20. **I dreamt last night of the three weird sisters**—it seems to be a feeler thrown out to Macbeth. He wants to test Macbeth. He has a vague suspicion that Macbeth might be taking some steps to secure the fulfilment of the witches' last prophecy. Cunningham thinks otherwise : "These words of Banquo seem almost a veiled incitement to Macbeth to 'that bloody business" which haunts the minds both ; and Macbeth replies in a strain of exaggerated but obscure courtesy with the offer of honours to Banquo." **Weird sisters**—the witches are so called because they are powerful instruments of destiny.

21. **To you they have.....some truth**—part of what they predicted of you has come true. **I think not of them**—Macbeth wants to appear innocent. But he is anxious at the same time to secure Banquo's abetment.

22. **Entreat an hour to serve**—spare an hour of my time for the purpose. **We can entreat**—it is pointed out that "we" is in

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anticipation of the royal dignity which seemed to be in the grasp of Macbeth ; so Rolfe explains : "When we can ask you to put an hour at our service." But it is better to take 'we' as equivalent to 'you and I.'

23. **Spent it.....business**—have a talk over that matter.

24. **At your kind'st leisure**—the time is yours whenever you are kind enough to spare time for the interview.

25. **Cleave to my consent**—carry out what I think best for you and me. Other interpretations are : (1) join my party and remain in it ; (2) "tie yourself to my fortune and counsel." —*Hudson* ; (3) if you will come to an understanding with me and keep to it. **When 't is**—when I have made up my mind. Other interpretations are : (1) when the leisure arrives ; (2) "when the result is attained."—*Clark and Wright* ; (3) when the third prediction of the witches fulfilled ; (3) when my counsel is given ; (5) when my party is in process of formation.

26, **It shall make honour for you**--Macbeth means distinction to be conferred by him as king on Banquo, but Banquo understands honourable, straightforward dealings. So—provided that. **I lose none**—I do not compromise my honour.

27. **Augment**—increase.

28. **Bosom**—conscience. **Franchised**—innocent. **Allegiance**—loyalty to the king. **Clear**—unstained.

29. **Shall be counsell'd**—shall be guided by your advice.

26-29.—(*Explanation.*) **So I lose none counsell'd**—This is the reply which Banquo makes to Macbeth's subtle suggestion. Macbeth desires Banquo to make common cause with him, for in that case he will be a gainer. But Macbeth's hint is ambiguous to Banquo. Macbeth suggests that Banquo stands the chance of winning honour. Banquo replies that he is prepared to seek honour provided he is not called upon to do anything dishonourable. If he can keep his conscience clear and his loyalty to the king untainted, he will let himself be guided by Macbeth's advice.

29. **Good repose, the while**—may you sleep well in the meantime.

31. **Drink**—a glass of curdled milk and wine drunk just before retiring to bed.

32. **Get thee to bed**—Macbeth dismisses the servant. The bell was the pre-arranged signal between him and his wife that all was ready and the grooms were dead asleep.

33. **In this a dagger which I see before me**—the vision of a dagger rises before Macbeth's eyes. Some think that the dagger that Macbeth sees has a material appearance ; others think that it is a hallucination, caused by Macbeth's distraught mental condition. Other again think that the dagger is only "a representation in the

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spiritual world," *i.e.*, it is real in so far as it is actually staged in the spiritual world, Macbeth being no longer on the ordinary human plane but subject to influence from outside. On the stage the dagger is not usually shown, Macbeth thinks he sees it on a table. He tries to grasp it, but on failing to do so gets confused. Finally, he decides that it is only a vision.

34. **The handle toward my hand**—the dagger can be but a projection of Macbeth's mind ; the temptation within him takes a material and visual shape. The handle of the dagger is towards him as an invitation to him to grasp it and make use of it to fulfil his ambition. **Clutch**—grasp.

35. **I have thee not**—the dagger which he sees dangling in the air eludes his grasp. **Yet I see thee still**—yet the vision persists.

36. **Fatal**—prophetic ; frought with destiny. **Sensible**—capable of being perceived by.

37. **Feeling**—sense of touch.

36-37. **Art thou not, fatal vision.....sight**—you are no more than a vision or a phantom ; you are visible to the eye, but are you not capable of being caught hold of ?

38. **A dagger of the mind**—a dagger that has been created by his imagination. **A false creation**—a phantom.

39. **Heat-oppressed brain**—mind deranged by excited fancies.

40. **In form as palpable**—in form as tangible.

41. **This which now I draw**—Macbeth lay hand on his own dagger. He seems to see no difference between the dagger he draws and the one that dangles in the air before his eyes ; yet he cannot touch the last one—as he puts out his arm, it stems to melt away into the air.

42. **Thou marshall'st me**—you guide me along. The dagger floats before him, pointing to Duncan's chamber. A marshall was an officer who conducted visitors to the king.

43. **And such an instrument I was to use**—the very dagger that I was to use is present as a phantom before my eyes.

44. **Mine eyes are made the fools o' the other senses**—my eyes are mocked by other senses.

45. **Or else worth all the rest**—or the evidence of my eyes weighs down the evidence of all the other senses.

46. **Dudgeon**—hilt. **Gouts**—drops.

47. **Which was not so before**—the dagger was not bloodstained before. **Therer's no such thing**—the dagger cannot be real.

48-49. **It is the bloody business which.....eyes**—It is my murderous designs which call up this phantom dagger before my eyes. **Bloody**—murderous. **Business**—undertaking. **Informs thus**—takes the shape of a dagger.

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44-49. (*Explanation*). **Mine eyes are made the fools.....thus to mine eyes**—The dagger still dangles in the air before Macbeth's eyes. When he puts out his hand to catch hold of it, it melts away into the air. Macbeth does not know whether he should trust his eyes or his other senses. The dagger is persistently present before his eyes. Either his eyes are mocked by other senses, or his eyes alone are to be trusted to the exclusion of other senses. The dagger is still before his eyes. Now he begins to see spots of blood on its hilt. A moment ago it was not blood-stained. Then Macbeth convinces himself that it cannot be a real dagger. The murderous thoughts within him take the shape of a dagger, and appear before his eyes.

49. **The one half-world**—that is the northern hemisphere where it is now night.

50. **Nature seems dead**—all living creatures are sleep. **Wicked dreams**—vicious dreams or nightmares. **Abuse**—deceive or torment.

51. **The curtain'd sleep**—persons sleeping peacefully with curtains drawn all around. **Witchcraft**—witches. Abstract for concrete.

52. **Pale Hecates offerings**—Hecate was originally a goddess indentified with Diana, Proserpine and the Moon; afterwards represented as the goddess of night and of the lower world ; still later as the presiding deity of magic, and the queen of spirits, witches and ghosts. **Wither'd murder**—grant murderer.

53. **Alarum'd**—called to action. **Sentinel**—watchman.

54. **Whose howl's his watch**—who by howling tells the murderer the hour of the night. **His**—used for 'its'. **With his stealthy pace**—moving cautiously and noislessly.

55. **With Tarquin's ravishing strides**—Tarquin was the son of the Roman King Tarquinius Superbus ; he outraged the modesty of Lucretia, wife of Collatinus. Lucretia stabbed herself after telling the story of her shame in the presence of her father, husband and the friends, calling upon them to avenge the insult. The result was that the king was driven from Rome, and Rome was proclaimed a republic. **Ravishing**—for the purpose of outraging the modesty of Lucretia. **Strides**—person, wishing to walk noiselessly in the dark, take long tiptoe, stealing steps in order to avoid sound by planning the feet as seldom as possible. **Towards his design**—in order to carry out his purpose.

56. **Moves like a ghost**—moves as imperceptible as a ghost. **Firm-set earth**—earth set motionless in the centre of the universe.

57. **For fear**—lest.

58. **The very stones**—the stones with which the corridor was paved. **Prate of my whereabout**—talk of my purpose, or where I am going.

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59-60. **Take the present horror...with it**—break the hushed and awed silence which possesses the hour and which is so suited to the deed of horror which is going to be committed. **Threat**—merely plan to kill. **He lives**—Duncan is alive.

61. **Words to the heat of deeds.....gives**—words, instead of inciting the ardour for action ; rather cool it.

62. **I go**—Macbeth seems to be rather prompt in going to execute his plan. He is rather embarassed by the preliminaries and preparations. **It is done**—as soon as I go, the murder is done.

63. **Hear it not**—he does not want Duncan to hear the bell. **Knell**—death-bell.

ACT II : SCENE II

Analysis. Lady Macbeth has fortified herself by drinking. The drink has stupefied Duncan's grooms, but it has emboldened Lady Macbeth. She heard the shrieking of the owl a little while ago, and thinks her husband must be now busy about the act. The doors are open and the grooms, who have been duped, are dead asleep. Suddenly Macbeth cries from within, "Who is there ? What ho !" Lady Macbeth thinks that the grooms have waked up, and the murder has not been done. But she laid the dagger ready ; she wonders how Macbeth could have missed them. She could have done the murder if Duncan had not resembled her father.

Now appears Macbeth himself, and cries out that he has done the deed. Did she not hear a noise ? Lady Macbeth replies that she heard the owls scream and the crickets cry. Macbeth looks at his own hands, and says that this is a sorry sight. Lady Macbeth reproaches him for thinking so. Macbeth now tells her how the murder was done. He heard in the second chamber one laugh in his sleep and the other cry, 'murder' ! They waked up each other ; then they said their prayers, and composed themselves to sleep again. One cried, "God bless us !" and the other replied, "Amen." Macbeth is sorry that he could not say amen after them. He is worried about it. He had the greatest need of a blessing, and could not say 'amen'. Lady Macbeth tries to comfort him. But Macbeth goes on. He says he heard a voice cry. "Sleep no more ! Macbeth murders sleep." He shudders to think that he has murdered the king when sleeping most unsuspectingly. Lady Macbeth sees how it has been working on his mind, and is anxious to soothe his distracted brain. She bids him go and wash away the bloodstains from his hands. Why has he brought the daggers with him ? He should have left them where they were. She bids him go back and carry the daggers, and smear the sleeping grooms with blood, if the king is still bleeding, for it must be made appear that they have done the murder.

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Macbeth now seems to hear a knocking within. Every noise seems to startle him. He again looks at his hands. They seem to pluck out his eyes. He wonders whether all the water of the ocean will ever wash away this blood from his hands. He rather thinks that his blood-stained hand will make all the seas red. Lady Macbeth enters, and holds up her blood-stained hands, before her husband. She does not mind her blood-stained hands, but she is ashamed to have such a timid heart as her husband's. She too hears a knocking at the south entrance. It is better that they should retire to their chamber. She does not worry about the blood that stains her hands. A little water will clear the crime out of them. But she is sorry to see why her husband is so shaken. There is more knocking now. She bids Macbeth put on his might-gown, lest he might have to appear. Let him not look so distracted. There is a knocking again. Macbeth wishes that it would wake Duncan from his eternal aleep.

Critical Notes. It is the murder-scene. Lady Macbeth waits in tense suspense for the result of her husband's action. She can little trust him, though she has made everything ready for the accomplishment of the murder. In fact Lady Macbeth does no blench ; she seems to be abnormally strong of nerve. When Macbeth comes back from the king's chamber after having done the murder, he is shaken with terror and confusion—his fancy is still possessed with horror of the deed. The Nemesis is working on him. The psychological effect of the murder upon a sensitive mind and imaginative nature could not have been more powerfully and graphically portrayed than in this scene. So Boas writes. "The scene is written with a pen of fire."

"This scene, the crisis of the action, is conceived with unsurpassed intensity. How to persent murder in drama was a problem that troubled the ancients. If done on the stage it was too horrible, if reported by a messenger, too frigid. In this supreme scene, Shakespeare has solved the problem. We see the murder as it were mirrored in the souls of the two agents. So in the *Agamemnon* of Aeschylus the murder is mirrored for us in the clairvoyant vision of Cassandra."—*Grierson.*

Notes and Explanations

1. **That**—wine. **That which hath made.....bold**—wine has stupefied the king's attendants, but it has armed Lady Macbeth with iron will and nerve. But the point is that Lady Macbeth puts drugs into the wine which the king's attendants drank, while her wine was free from any dope.

2. **Quench'd them**—stupefied them. **Given me fire**—raised me to the highest pitch of excitement. **Peace**—Lady Macbeth is startled by the slightest noise. She finds that it is no more than the cry of the owl.

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3. **The fatal bellman**—a bellman was a town crier, an officer whose duty it was to keep watch in the streets and to call the hours at night. It was also his duty to announce the death, and to exhort church people to pray for a dead or condemned man. The owl, as a bird of evil omen, is compared to the bellman sent to a condemned person the night before his execution. The owl seems to announce the coming death of the king.

4. **Gives the stern'st good-night**—bids the grimmest goodnight. **He is about it**—he must be engaged in the act of murder.

5. **Doors**—the doors of Duncan's chamber. **Surfeited**—exceedingly drunk. **Grooms**—servants. The word was originally applied to all menial servants, but is how restricted to a servant attending to a horse.

6. **Do mock their change with snores**—are now snoring in their sleep, and forgetful of the duty of keeping guard over the king. **Charge**—the king entrusted to their care. **Drugg'd**—doped. **Possets**—a hot drink made of milkcurdled with wine, to which eggs, sugar, spices, grated biscuits, and other ingredients are added ; it is taken just before going to bed as a remedy for cold.

7. **That**—so that. **Death and nature do contend about them**—the nature is struggling with death. **Nature**—vital powers.

8. **Whether they live or die**—it being uncertain whether they will survive the effects to the drug, or succumb to it. **Who's there**—Macbeth fancies that he hears a noise, and cries out involuntarily. He has already done the murder, and is returning from the king's chamber. Either he shouts from behind the scene or he rushes out for a moment into the balcony.

9. **Alack**—alas. **They**—the grooms. **Awaked**—been roused from their sleep. **Alack ! I am afraid.....awaked**—Lady Macbeth is in an agony of suspense ; and she is afraid that Macbeth has not been able to carry out his purpose.

10-11. **'T is not done**—the murder has not been done. **The attempt and not the deed confounds us**—Lady Macbeth means to say that an unsuccessful attempt to murder the king would mean ruin to them. If the attempt is successful and murder is done, then of course their ambition is realised. But in case it is bungled, they will lose all, including even their lives. **Confounds us**—destroys us. **Hark**—some noise is heard. **I laid their daggers ready**—Lady Macbeth has prepared everything to help her husband in carrying out the purpose. **Their daggers**—the daggers of the grooms.

12. **He could not miss 'em**—Macbeth could not but find the daggers ready. **Had he not**—if Duncan had not.

13. **My father**—Lady Macbeth was grand-daughter of Kenneth IV who was deposed by Malcolm, the son of Kenneth III, Duncan being the grandson of Malcolm. There were some kinship

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between the houses of Kenneth IV and Duncan, which might account for the facial resemblance of Duncan, here referred to.

12-13. **Had he not resembled.....done 't**—Lady Macbeth would not have hesitated to murder Duncan, if he had not resembled her father. So Lady Macbeth is not wholly unsexed. "In her case, conscience works as effectually through the feelings as through imagination in that of her husband."—*Hudson.* **My husband**—what intensity of affection and also of ambition is packed into this cry !

14. **I have done the deed**—Macbeth's mind seems to be partially unhinged. It is not uttered in a tone of boasting. He seems to imply what an ordeal he had been through in committing the murder. **A noise**—the noise which startled Macbeth above.

15. **I heard the owl scream and the crickets cry**—Lady Macbeth gives a very matter-of-fact and realistic answer. Of course the screaming of the owls and the cry of the crickets were regarded with superstition in those days. It should be noted that Macbeth and his wife speak with bated breath, lest they rouse some one.

16. **As I descended**—Macbeth came down from the balcony by the staircase.

18. **Hark**—another imaginary noise startles Macbeth.

19. **Lies**—sleeps. **Second chamber**—another bed-room adjacent to that of Duncan.

20. **This is a sorry sight**—Macbeth looks on his hands, and shudders.

21. **A foolish thought to say a sory sight**—you are a fool to think that the murder of Duncan is something which should be regretted.

22. **One did laugh**—one who laughed. **And one cried, 'murder'**! —Lady Macbeth tells her husband that it was Donalbain who slept in the next chamber. But Macbeth seemed to have heard two voices. The voices were those of Malcolm and Donalbain, both of whom slept in the same room. **One cried**—one who cried.

23. **That**—with the result that. **Stood**—stood still.

24-25. **Address'd them again to sleep**—composed themselves to sleep again. **Longed together**—accommodated in the same bed-room.

26. **Amen**—let it be so.

27. **As**—as if. **These hangman's hands**—these blood-stained hands of mine.

29. **Listening their fear**—while I stood listening of their cries of alarm. **Say "Amen"**—join in their prayers.

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29. **Consider it not so deeply**—do not take the matter so deeply to heart. Lady Macbeth tries to soothe the excited nerve of her husband by regarding the incident as if it were nothing. But Macbeth is once again a prey to his horrid imaginings.

30. **But wherefore could not I.....'Amen'**—Macbeth was unable to get rid of his sense of outraged conscience. A revulsion of feeling seems to have taken place in him.

31. **I had most need of blessing**—having committed the crime of murder needed most the blessing of God.

32. **Stuck in my throat**—refused to come out of my throat. The crime now possesses Macbeth's imagination.

32-33. **These deeds.....after these ways**—you must not brood over the crime. Macbeth's sensitive nature and imagination assert themselves again. **It will make us mad**—if you think of it in this way, it will drive us mad.

34. **Methought**—it seemed to me. **I heard a voice cry 'Sleep no more'**—Macbeth is again subject to a hallucination through his imagination.

35. **Murder sleep**—murder a sleeping man. **The innocent sleep**—the sleep of Duncan heightens his innocence and helplessness. Macbeth had struck down a man who could offer no resistance. The crime in all its poignant significance comes home to Macbeth's mind.

36. **Knits up the ravell'd sleave of care**—composes all worry and distraction. **Knits up**—ties up in an orderly fashion. **Ravell'd**—knotted ; which had become entangled. **Sleave**—floss silk ; matted unspun silk. The metaphor is taken from a tangled mass of raw silk, which has to be straightened out before it is fit to be woven. This rhapsody on sleep seems to relieve the surcharged feelings of Macbeth.

37. **The death of each day's life**—that which ends the daily round of activities as death ends life. **Sore labour's bath**—which refreshes a man who has gone through heavy toil as a bath may give us a sense of refreshment after our exhaustion.

38. **Balm of hurt minds**—which soothes the minds and drives away all anguish, as the application of soothing ointment relieves bodily pain. **Great nature's second course**—the powerful means by which nature daily restores energy and strength which are born out in the course of labour. The second course at meals contains the richest and daintiest dishes.

39. **Chief nourisher in life's feast**—the principal restorative agent. Of all things that help in restoring strength and energy, sleep is the foremost.

34-39. (*Explanation*). **Methought I heard a voice.....in life's feast**—This is a rhetorical outburst from Macbeth after he has

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been shaken by the crime of murder. He realises the crime in its most painful significance. He has murdered his king while sleeping, and, therefore, unable to offer any resistance. So shaken is he in mind that he begins to hear an airy voice of cry that he has murdered sleep. With sleep goes the idea of innocence. He has murdered the innocent and sleeping Duncan, his king and benefactor. He now stands against at what he has done. He releases his charged feelings in a rhapsody on sleep—sleep that banishes all care and anxiety and composes the nerve and the spirit to rest, sleep that puts an end to the daily round of activities and refreshes the energy and strength that are worn out ; sleep that brings composure to distracted minds and help to build up the worn out tissues and sustains the energy and strength of life.

39. **What do you mean**—Lady Macbeth, with her rather matter-of-fact and unimaginative mind, can make nothing of Macbeth's rhetorical outburst.

40. **Still it cried.....all the house**—the haunting terror of the crime cannot be put away by Macbeth from his mind.

41-42. **Glamis hath murder'd sleep.....shall sleep no more**—Macbeth already begins to feel the effect of retribution. We are reminded here of his first soliloquy :

> "this even-handed justice,
> Commends the ingredients of our poison'd chalice
> To our own lips."

But his punishment appears in a subtler form than he imagines through his fear of the insecurity of his position, established as it is by crime. His retribution is wrought through his imagination. The perpetual risk of his position as king, and the fear that he might be deposed at any moment, was a much milder punishment than the one that came through his imagination.

43. **Who was it that thus cried**—it should be noted that Macbeth's retribution started ealier and that Lady Macbeth could make little of it. Supernatural terror was non-existent to Lady Macbeth, but entirely possessed and dominated Macbeth's imagination.

44. **Unbend your noble strength**—give way to nervous terror. **To think**—in thinking.

45. **Brainsickly**—feverishly ; in an incoherent manner as if your mind had been unbalanced. **Go get some water**—to Lady Macbeth it is so simple a thing as to wash off the stains of blood from the hands, and to be done with the crime.

46. **Filthy witness**—blood-stains.

47. **Why did you bring.....from the place**—Lady Macbeth has sufficiently recovered her self-composure, and now attends to practical details.

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48. **They must lie there**—these daggers must lie in the room where the murder has been done. **Smear**—daub.

49. **The sleepy grooms with blood**—Lady Macbeth can be horrid. She appears to be quite callous. It is from a callous woman that such a suggestion can come. **I'll go no more**—Macbeth is unstrung by his imaginative terror. The contrast between husband and wife is nowhere more marked than here. Lady Macbeth is quite a realist, not at all subject to any nervous shock. Nay, she is in a position now to attend to details of personal safety. But Macbeth still stands aghast at the crime, which seems to sear his imagination and spirit.

50. **I am afraid.....done**—I still shudder at the ghastly crime I have done.

51. **Look on 't again I dare not**—I have not the nerve to go and look on what I have done. **Infirm of purpose**—weak in resolution. Lady Macbeth takes to chiding her husband in order to bring him to sober senses.

52. **Give me the daggers**—Lady Macbeth's nerve has not been shaken at all ; it means nothing to her to carry the daggers back to the room in which the murder has been done. The shock is less to Lady Macbeth because she herself has not done the murder. She might have done it too in a spirit of bravado.

53. **Are but as pictures**—are no more to be feared than painted pictures.

53-54. **'T is the eye of childhood.....devil**—only children can be frightened by picture of the devil. Why then do you fear to return to the murder-chamber where lie a dead man and two sleeping grooms ? **Painted devil**—pictures of the devil were frequent in Shakespeare's days. Compare :

"Terrify babes, my lord, with painted devils—
Webster : *The White Devil.*

54. **If he do bleed**—if Duncan continues to bleed.

55. **Gild**—paint. **Withal**—with the blood of Duncan.

56. **It must seem their guilt**—it must be made to appear that they have done the murder. [*S. D.*] **Knocking within**—the knocking is explained in the next scene as being that of Malcolm and Lennox who are seeking admission at the south gate of Macbeth's castle. The knocking recalls the audience from a world of crime and horror to normal life.

57. **How is 't with me** –what is the matter with me ? **Appals**—dismays.

58. **What hands are here**—Macbeth looks at his hands again, and they seem to sear out his eyes. He cannot gaze upon them. **They pluck out mine eyes**—as he stares at his bloody hand, his

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eyes seem to shoot out of their sockets. A hint of the revulsion of feeling that has taken place in Macbeth. It is not so simple a matter with him as to get rid of the memory of the crime by washing off the stains of blood.

59-60. **Will all great Neptune's ocean.....hand**—to Macbeth, with his feverish imagination, all the water of the ocean cannot wash away the stains of blood from his hands. The point is that the innocent blood he has spilled has gone into this conscience. It is but symbolical that blood sticks to his hands. His conscience and his imagination cannot be dispossessed of this horrid image of murder. **Neptune's ocean**—when Saturn was dethroned, his kingdom was divided among his three rebellious sons. Jupiter became the ruler of heaven and earth ; Pluto of the lower world, and Neptune of the sea.

61. **The multitudinous seas incarnadine**—dye crimson the whole sea with its endless succession of waves. All the accumulated waters of the sea cannot wash off the stains of blood from his hands ; they will rather be dyed, if his hands were dipped in the sea. **Multitudinous**—vast ; measureless. **Multitudinous seas**—one of the immortal phrases of Shakespeare's. Not a plurality of seas is suggested, but rather the boundless expanse of water, the endless succession of waves. **Incarnadine**—redden.

62. **Making the green one red**—changing the green waves into a sheet of uniform red. "The imagination of Macbeth dwells upon the conversion of the *universal green* into *one pervading red*."—*Elwin.*

57-62. (*Explanation*). **How is 't with me, when every noise..... making the green one red**—Macbeth is in a state of nervous apprehension. Every little noise startles him. He does not understand why it should be so. Then he looks at his hands, stained with blood. Lady Macbeth suggests to him to get a little water and wash off the stains of blood. But to Macceth it does not seem to be so simple a matter. As he looks at his blood-stained hands, his eyes seem to be seared out of their sockets. He cannot believe that all the accumulated waters of the ocean can wash off the stains of blood from his hands. Rather he thinks that his hands will turn the green sea into a sheet of uniform red. Instead of the sea washing his hands clean, his hands will paint it all red. The point is that Macbeth's imagination is entirely dominated by the horrid image of murder. The blood that stains his hands, has got into his conscience and imagination.

63. **My hands are of your colour**—My hands are as blood-stained as yours. Lady Macbeth, who seems to be so dull of imagination, cannot understand the nature of her husband's terror. Her husband's exclamations seem to be silly to her. What can be there in blood that stains his hands. It can be easily washed off

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by a little water. Lady Macbeth forgets that though the blood can be washed off so easily, the sense of guit, the outraged conscience, and the convulsed imagination will abide for ever. Macbeth's retribution has started ; but Lady Macbeth is insensible of it.

64. **Wear a heart so white**—carry a timid and fluttering heart within me like yours, Lady Macbeth wants to chide her husband back into a manly spirit with the valour of her tongue. She evidently looks at the white, drawn face of her husband, and makes this remark in a spirit partly of caution and partly of rebuke.

65. **Entry**—entrance. **Retire we to our chamber**—let us retire to our bed-roon, and pretend to be asleep.

66. **A little water clears us of this deed**—this conviction of Lady Macbeth can mean but little to Macbeth, whose imagination and soul are possessed by the shuddering terror of the crime. A little water may wash away the stains of blood, but what the abiding sense of guilt, the revolted conscience, and the sticken imagination ?

67. **How easy is it, then**—you can easily get rid of the memory of the crime by removing its filthy witness from your hands. I wonder why you do not do it. **Constancy**—firmness.

68. **Hath left you unattended**—has totally forsaken you. You no longer have a firm will which will keep you free from nervous apprehensions ; you are non-plussed and are thus rendering your self liable to the risk of detection. **Hark ! more knocking**—Lady Macbeth, with her self-possession unshaken, is never attentive to the practical details.

69. **Get on**—change into. **Night-gown**—dressing-gown worn at night. The point is that if he was in his ordinary dress, it would arouse suspicion ; but if he had been hastily summoned from sleep, it would be natural for him to slip on his night gown befor coming out of the chamber. **Lest occasion call us**—lest it may be necessary for us to get up from our bed, and appear outside.

70. **To be watchers**—to have kept awake till this hour ; not to have gone to bed though it was late at night.

70-71. **Be not lost.....thoughts**—do not look so bewildered pull yourself together, remember what you have done, what you have yet to do to save yourself, and do not remain absorbed in morbid fancies.

72. **To know my deed.....myself**—if I were to realise the full enormity of my crime, it would be better to remain self-forgetful as I am just now, (1) "With a knowledge of my deed, I were better lost to the knowledge both my nature and of my existence"—*Elwin ;* (2) "If I must look my deed in the face, it were better for me to lose consciousness altogether."—*Clark and Wright.*

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73. **Wake Duncan with thy knocking**—"a heart-rendering outburst of repentant agony."—*Scrimgeour*. Now Macbeth wishes that his deed might be undone. **Would**—wish.

ACT II : SCENE III

Analysis. The porter is waked up by the knocking at the South gate. Being disturbed at this unusual hour of night, he begins to mutter to himself. He imagines that he is the gate-keeper of hell. The first fellow whom he lets in, is, as he imagines, a farmer who hanged himself when his expectation of getting a good crop was disappointed. The second fellow whom he lets in, is an equivocator, who could swear right to be wrong and wrong to be right ; yet all his sophistry could not enable him to go to heaven. This third fellow is an English tailor, who comes to hell for stealing cloth. Then he suddenly gives up the idea of playing the gate-keeper of hell.

He opens the gate and admits Macduff and Lennox. Macduff is surprised that he should be in bed so late. The porter replies that there was carousing till late at night. Soon Macbeth enters. They say good-morrow to each other. Macduff has come to inquire whether the king is up from bed, as he was commanded by the king to call early in the morning. Macbeth offers to conduct him to the king, but Macduff goes alone. Lennox is now left with Macbeth. He narrates the incidents of the last night, when a great storm blew striking down the chimneys, and wails were heard in the air—strange shrieks of death, and presages of evil times to come.

Macduff re-enters, with horror painted on his face, and horror in his shaken voice. Both Macbeth and Lennox ask what the matter is. Now Macduff tells them that the king has been murdered ; he is unable to give more details, and bids Macbeth and Lennox go and see. Macduff now gives the alarm, and the bell rings.

Next enters Lady Macbeth, summoned by the ringing bell. She wants to know what the matter is, but Macduff can hardly bring himself to tell her of the king's murder. Then enters Banquo. Macduff tells Banquo that the king has been murdered. Lady Macbeth cries out in amazement that it had been done in their house. Banquo corrects her by saying that anywhere the murder would have been too cruel and outrageous. Now re-enter Macbeth and Lennox. Macbeth wishes that he had died an hour before this calamity ; henceforth he cannot trust anything human. Life seems to be drawn dry of all its joys. Then enter Malcolm and Donalbain. They now learn that their father has been murdered. They are told by Lennox that he has been murdered by his grooms, for he found their hands and faces all stained with blood and also

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their blood-stained daggers upon their pillows. When they were questioned, they could give no coherent replies. It now appears that Macbeth has killed these grooms. Macduff asks Macbeth why he has done so. Macbeth excuses himself by saying that in a moment like this no man can act calmly. When he looked upon Duncan, lying with gaping wounds, he could not forbear himself, and dispatched at once his murderers, who lay soaked in his blood. Lady Macbeth now cries for help. Malcolm and Donalbain whispher to each other. They suspect foul play, and decided to leave the place at once. In the meantime Lady Macbeth faints, and is carried out.

Banquo proposes that as soon as they put on their clothes, they should meet and investigate this affair. He swears in the name of God that he will unearth the murder. All present there take the same oath. They all retire except Malcolm and Donalbain. Malcolm proposes to go to England ; and Donalbain to Ireland. If they thus keep away from each other, their lives will be safer. They are both convinced that it will be their next turn to be murdered. So without the ceremony of leave-taking, they propose to steal away.

Critical Note. It has been doubted the porter's scene is from Shakespear's pen. Hales gives the following reasons for regarding it as genuine :—

(1) It is an integral part of the play ; as there was a knocking in the last scene, a porter is essential, and he must have something to say. (2) It is necessary as a relief to the surrounding horror ; a light interlude is necessary because a monotony of horror cannot be sustained. (3) It is necessary according to the law of contrast observed elsewhere ; *Macbeth* would be unique among the tragedies of Shakespeare if the comic element were entirely absent. (4) The porter's speech is dramatically relevant ; it is a powerful piece of irony without which the play would be poorer. (5) The style and language are Shakespearean ; the fancy of the porter, the manner in which Macduff draws him out, the rhythmic prose and the general conception—all accord with Shakespeare's practice in other plays.

The porter's scene brings us into the daylight of realities and seems to be in its proper place. The tragic tension needs to be relieved, and the porter's scene could have occurred nowhere better than here. If it is necessary for Macbeth and Lady Macbeth to keep their countenances for their own safety, it is as much necessary that the audience should be released from the atmosphere of tragic gloom and terror. With a true psychological insight—for a tragic scene cannot be sustained too long - Shakespeare provides this comic relief, while we are made to forget the tragic background of darkness, mystery, and terror.

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Notes and Explanations

1. **Here 's a knocking indeed**—it is a violent knocking, which would pull the gate off its hinges. The porter is still sleepy and drunken ; he begins to mutter to himself as he gets up and prepares to open the gate.

1-2. **Porter of hell-gate**—a gate-keeper to hell. There is unconscious irony in it.

2. **He should have old turning the key**—he should be kept pretty busy with locking and unlocking the gate of hell. **Old turning**—plenty of turning. 'Old' is a slang intensive, not wholly obsolete.

4. **Beelzebub**—a Philistine god, worshipped in Palestine. In the New Testamenth he is described as 'Prince of the Devils.' Hence the name is applied to Satan. **Here 's a farmer**—the porter imagines that as the gate-keeper of hell, he is going to admit a farmer.

4-5. **On the expectation of plenty**—because there was every chance of a bumper crop. It would result in a fall in the price of corn, which would mean loss to one who had hoarded corn in the hope of selling at a profit.

N. B. In the summer of 1606 prices of corn fell very low in England. In 1638 English farmer is actually reported to have committed sucide for this reason. Another explanation is that 'on the expectation of plenty' means after waiting too long for a good harvest.

5. **Come in time**—you have come in time. The idea is that the farmer who hoped to make a point out of a famine, and who has committed suicide, could not have come to hell too soon. **Napkins**—pocket handkerchiefs. Hell is full of fire intended for the punishment of sinners ; therefore, the farmer will need plenty of handkerchiefs to wipe off his perspiration. **Enow**—enough.

6. **Sweat for't**—(1) be punished adequately for your crime ; (2) perspire freely in the heat.

7. **Other devil's name**—according to Hales, the other devil is Belial, the 'lawless one' among the demons. He may be Demogorgon, as the porter does not name him, for the very mention of Demogorgon was supposed to bring disaster. **Faith**—in faith.

8. **Equivocator**—one who practises the art of equivocation, according to which a man may make a statement that would deceive other so long as he himself can interpret it truthfully, however, strained his interpretation may be.

N. B. The reference is to (1) Jesuistical doctrine of equivocation which Pascal definies as "the use of ambiguous terms, leading people to understand them in another sense from that in which we understand them ourselves and one aspect of which was

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that no oath could bind the conscience."—(2) the trial (in March, 1606) of one Henry Garnet, Superior to the Jesuits in England for complicity in the Gunpowder Plot of 1605 during which Garnet tried to defend his perjuries by means of the doctrine of equivocation ; (3) to Macbeth himself, who equivocates so clearly in this scene.

8-9. **Swear in both the scales.....scale**—completely and directly contradict himself on oath, supporting and rebutting by turns the same fact or opinion.

9. **Treason enough**—reference to the Gunpowder Plot in which Garnet was one of the conspirators. When the Jesuits could not persuade James I to alter some of the laws against them, they plotted to blow up by means of gunpowder the Houses of Parliament on November 5, 1605, a day when both the King and the prince of Wales would have been present there. **For God's sake**—because the plot was intended to make way for a catholic monarch in England, the Jesuits holding that the end justified the means.

11. **Equivocate to heaven**—secure his passage to heaven by practising equivocation. Garnet was hanged and the porter in his fancy admitted him to hell.

12-13. **An English tailor.....French hose**—a double allusion here : (1) tailors who were notorious for stealing part of the cloth given to them by customers for making garments ; (2) the contemporary English vice of aping, foreign fashions in dress. **French hose**—breeches such as were worn by the French. The French hose was of two kinds—close-fitting drawers and large, wide breeches. It is stated in Nixon's *Black Year* that tailors were formerly wont to steal half a yard of cloth in making up a pair of breeches, and that they lately started cheating their customers in lace too, and taking more than enough for the new fashion's sake.

14. **Roast your goose**—(1) heat your smoothing-iron : (2) receive adequate punishment for your thefts. The tailor's something-iron is called a 'goose' because its handle is shaped like the neck of a goose and from its being often roasted before the fire.

15. **Never at quiet**—I am not allowed to have any rest.

16. **What are you**—addressed to the persons knocking. This place is too cold for hell—now the porter awakes to the reality ; he realises how cold the place is, and it cannot be hell because it is so cold.

15-16. **Devil-porter**—act of porter to the devil. **I had thought .....in**—I wanted to admit.

16-17. **Some of all professions**—some representatives of all the professions **Go the primrose way**—pursue the pleasant path of vice and wickedness. The primrose is a common wild plant

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which flowers in early spiring. We may compare here 'the primrose path of dalliance' in *Hamlet*, and also 'the flowery way that leads to the broad gate and the great fire' in *All's Well*. The Biblical : "Wide is the gate and broad is the way that leadeth to destruction, and many be they that enter in thereby."— *Matthew*, VII. 13.

17. **To the everlasting bonfire**—that leads to the external flames in which sinners are tortured in hell. **Bonfire**—literally a fire of bones, *i.e.*, the funeral fire ; later it meant any fire in which old bones and other rubbish were burnt, for example, Gehenna, the Jewish word for hell was a valley west of Jerusalem where the refuse of the city as also the dead bodies of criminals and of animals were burnt.

18. **Anon**—I am coming soon.

18-19. **Remember the porter**—do not foreget to give the porter his usual tip. By this time the porter is at the gate.

20-21. **Was it so late.....you do lie so late**—did you keep late hours last night that you are in bed so late in the morning ?

22. **Carousing**—engaged in drink and merriment. **The second cock**—the second crow of the cock is supposed to be about 3 A. M. Compare : "The second cock hath crowed 'tis three o'clock.'—*Romeo and Juliet*.

N. B. It is not easy to fix the time for the murder. The knocking evidently began shortly after the murder of Duncan : it cannot be that the porter has been sleeping so late then. Supposing that Macbeth's household retired at 3 A. M., the whole interval between that time and morning cannot have been taken up by the events in Scene II. But the gap is not so obvious to the imagination—so tense is the atmosphere of the two scenes.

28. **Stirring** - out of bed.

30. **Both**—both of you—Macduff and Lennox.

32. **Timely**—early.

33. **Slipp'd**—let slip.

34. **I know this is a joyful trouble to you**—I am aware that you will be pleased to take me to the king, though it is a trouble to you. Macbeth wanted to have the discovery of Duncan's murder in his own presence, so as to establish his good faith all the better. But Macduff wishes to go alone either because he does not want to give Macbeth even a trouble which is welcome to him, or because he has been ordered to wait on the king alone. Delius thinks that 'this' refers to Macbeth's hospitality, and not to his offer to take Macduff to Duncan's chamber.

35. **Yet 't is one**—though you would have been glad to take the trouble, leave it to me, I shall be able to find my way to the king.

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36. **The labour we delight in physics pain**—whatever trouble we are glad to take, or is a pleasure to us, relieves us of any unpleasant sensation. **Physics**—cures.

37. **This is the door**—the door leading to Duncan's chamber. **Make so bold to call**—take the liberty of calling. **Make so bold**—venture. **To call**—as to call.

38. **'Tis my limited service**—it is the duty allotted to me. **Limited**—appointed. A legal sense of the term. **Service**—official duty.

39. **He did appoint so**—(i) he had arranged to leave today, but it cannot be. This is the sense that Macbeth has in his own mind. (2) That was what he had arranged to do, but he may now change his plan. This is the sense Macbeth wants to convey to Lennox.

40. **Unruly**—boisterous. The supernatural setting of the opening scene is reinforced ; the heavens seem to blazon forth the crime. It should be noted that while Lennox narrates the incidents of the stormy night ; Macbeth seems to be in a fit of abstraction. **Lay**—lodged.

42. **Lamentings**—wailings. **Heard i' the air**—these wailings were of the airy voice. **Strange screams of death**—shrieks of terror uttered by persons dying a violent death.

43. **Prophesying**—predictions. **With accents terrible**—in voices that struck terror into the hearts of all who heard them.

44. **Dire**—dreadful. **Combustion**—social calamities. **Confused**—confusing.

45. **New hatch'd**—newly-born. **Woeful time**—unfortunate age. "Pedantry may object that what has already been born cannot be foretold ('prophesied') but its operations can, and the age can be warned of what is ahead."—*Verity*. **Obscure bird**—the owl.

46. **Clamour'd**—hooted. **The live-long night**—throughout the whole of the night.

47. **Feverous**—feverish. **Shake**—quake.

40-47. (*Explanation*). **The night has been unruly.....was feverous and did shake**—Lennox relates the incidents and prodigies of last night. A violent storm blew, and the chimneys of the house in which Lennox lodged were torn away. People said that mysterious cries were heard—wailing sounds and shrieks, such as are uttered by persons dying a violent death. Voices were here predicting dreadful calamities and disorder and confusion which were soon to follow. The owl hooted all night. Some said that the earth seemed to have shivered.

N. B. These prodigies mentioned by Lennox are a proper accompaniment to the outrageous murder of Duncan.

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47. **'Twas a rough night**—Macbeth, still lost in himself, makes on further remark than than it was a boisterous night.

48-49. **My young remembrance cannot parallel a fellow to it**—the memory of a young man like myself cannot recall any incident that may be compared with it. **A fellow to it**—a night equally boisterous as the last one.

50. **O horrer**—Macduff can only report the murder of Duncan in his cry of horrer.

50-51. **Tongue not heart.....thee**—neither tongue can describe, nor heart can conceive the horror of the murder. Macduff is struck dumb by the horror of the murder. The horror that seizes upon his soul is painted on his face. **What's the matter**—"Macbeth's concealment of the murder forms a stage of the action which falls into two different parts ; the single effort which faces the first shock of discovery, and the very different strain required to meet the slowly gathering evidence of guilt. In the scene of the discovery, Macbeth is perfectly at home ; energetic action is needed, and he is dealing with men. His acted innocence appears to be better than his wife's ; Lady Macbeth goes near to suggesting a personal interest in the crime by her over-disclaim it.,'—*Moulton.*

52. **Confusion**—destruction. **Hath made his master piece**—has reached its climax.

53. **Scrrilegious**—impious. The use of the word is very appropriate, because the king is the anointed of God. The murder of the king was unholy murder, as the king is the representative of God on earth. **Ope**—open.

54. **The Lord's anointed temple**—sacred body of the king. In (1) *Samuel.* xiv. 10, the king is spoken of as "the Lord's anointed," because at the coronation ceremony Christian kings are anointed with holy oil, and in (2) *Corianthins* vi, 16, St. Paul describes a Christian king as 'the temple of the living God.' **Stole**—stolen. **Thence**—from the temple.

55. **The life o' the building**—"the soul which animated the body."—*Deighton.*

52-55. (*Explanation*). **Confusion now hath.....building**—Death has now achieved its master stroke. It is most unholy murder that has taken place because the king who is the Lord's anointed, has been done to death. The king is the temple of the living God ; the temple has been desecrated, and the soul which dwells in it, is now no more.

55. **What is 't you say ? the life**—Life' is emphatic, and Macbeth, with consummate hypocrisy, pretends not to have understood the metaphorical language of Macduff. It should be noted that Macbeth has been able to get over the nervous shock of the murder.

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and henceforth he never falters in playing the part of a host who has been most deeply stricken by the murder of his guest.

56. **Mean you his Majesty**—do you mean that His majesty has been murdered ?

57. **Destroy your sight**—blind your eyes. Macduff means to say that one who sees what he has seen, would shudder at it, and would not like to see it again.

58. **A new Gorgon**—the Gorgons were hideous monsters with golden wings, brazen claws, and enormous teeth. They were girdles of snakes, and their hair was also wreathed with snakes. Anybody who looked on them was turned into stone. **Do not bid me speak**—do not ask me to describe the details—they are too horrible.

59. **See, and then speak yourselves**—if you can stand the sight of it, go and see it, and then I doubt whether you will not be struck dumb by the horror of it.

60. **Alarum bell**—the bell rung as signal of danger in order to rouse the household. **Treason**—violation of allegiance to sovereign.

62. **Downy sleep**—placid sleep. 'Downy' is a transferred epithet. **Death's counterfeit**—the false image of death.

63. **Look on death itself**—sleep is but a false image of death, but they can now look on the exact image or representation of death in the murder of Duncan.

64. **The great doom's image**—the image of destruction such as to overtake the world on the Day of Judgment.

65. **As**—as if. **From your graves rise up** just as on the Day of Judgment the Dead will rise from their graves, so may you now get up from your beds. **Walk**—"technical term for the appearance of spirits upon the earth."—*Deighton.* **Sprites**—ghosts.

66. **Countenance this horror**—be in keeping this horrible murder. **Ring the bell**—Macduff's orders had not yet been carried out.

(*S. D.*) **Enter Lady Macbeth**—Lady Macbeth seems to come too soon. She is supposed to be in bed, and to have been roused by the knocking at the gate. In any case she would have come later.

67. **What's the business**—what is the matter ?

68. **Hideous trumpet**—the alarum bell. **Calls to parley**—summons to a conference.

69. **Speak, speak**—Lady Macbeth shows her agitation in her words.

70. **'Tis not for you to hear what I can speak**—I cannot relate the incident to a woman.

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71. **Repetition**—the recital of what has already been said.

72. **Would murder as it fall**—would kill the woman, who heard it.

74. **In our house**—*N. B.* Lady Macbeth falters in her speech. Her, words seem to give her away. She seems to be shocked, not at the murder of the king but because it has taken place in the castle of her husband. She seems to be concerned that her husband may be compromised. **Too cruel any where**—Banquo detects at once false ring in Lady Macbeth's words. He means to say there could be no excuse for the murder wherever it might have been committed. It might easily be inferred the Banquo had his suspicions. There is a subtle reproach conveyed in his words to Lady Macbeth.

75. **Duff**—short for Macduff. **Contradict thyself**—unsay what you have just said.

77-78. **Had I but died.....blessed time**—if I had died an hour before this mishap, I would have ended my life happily. Macbeth is indeed playing a part, but there is tragic irony. In fact he would haved lived and ended his life happily if he had died an hour before the murder of the king. **From this instant**—from this very moment.

79. **There's nothing serious in mortality**—these words are prophetic. Henceforth Macbeth could find little genuine interest in life. Not only did perils gather thick round him day by day as he sat on the throne of the murdered Duncan, but his life itself became a nightmare to him. **Mortality**—human life.

80. **All is but toys**—in life there is nothing of substantial value ; life is a vanity of vanities. **Renown and grace is dead**—(1) the famous and virtuous Duncan is no more ; (2) the fame which accompanies noble qualities is meaningless.

81. **Wine of life**—the toy of life, or the thrill and excitement of life. **Drawn**—used up. **Lees**—dregs.

82. **This vault**—the earth overarched by the heavens. There is a side reference to cellars in the house of the rich where wine is usually stored. **Brag**—boast.

81-83. **Tho wine of life is drawn.....brag of**—*N. B.* This speech seems to be in anticipation of what follows. Since the murder of Duncan, which places Macbeth on the throne, life has ceased to offer anything and excitement to him. In fact to Macbeth life becomes a long drawn out agony. It has been drained empty of all joy, and nothing is left but its bitterness for Macbeth to taste. Though Macbeth is playing a part, the revulsion of feeling that has taken place in him, not to be ever suppressed in the days to come, forces out these prophetic words for him.

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83. **Amiss**—wrong. **You are**—it is all wrong with you. **Do not know't**—are not aware of the calamity that has befallen you.

84. **The spring, the head.....blood**—the very fountain head of your life—your father.

86. **Your royal father's murder'd**—as contrasted with Macbeth, Macduff speaks in plain and direct words.

87. **Those of his chamber**—the grooms who guarded him in his bed chamber. **As it seem'd**—Lennox makes this qualification. He cannot vouch for the fact that the murder has been done by the grooms. Grierson thinks otherwise : "The garrulous Lennox goes off on the false scent laid by Lady Macbeth ('what' in our house ?) Macbeth chimes in. Macduff says nothing till he hears that the grooms have been killed, when his suspicion breaks out in angry question."

88. **Badged with blood**—daubed with blood. "All the servants of obility wore silver badges on their liveries, on which the arms of their masters were engraved,"—*Nares*.

89. **So were their daggers**—their daggers were also strained with blood.

91. **They stared**—they gaped in amazement. **Distracted**—beside themselves with terror.

93-94. **Yet I do repent.....them**—I regret having killed them outright in my fit of indignation. **Wherefore did you so**—Macduff's suspicion is at once awake, and it is searching question that he puts to Macbeth.

95. **Who can** be—a rhetorical question. **Wise, amazed**—cautious, while he is distracted. **Temperate and furious**—self-restrained when he is in a fit of passion.

96. **Loyal and neutral**—devoted to the king and yet keep himself impartial. **In a moment**—in one and the same moment, Macbeth means to say that when he saw the murdered king and the blood-stained grooms, he could not control his passion. Amazed as he was by the horrible murder, he could not retain his self-composure. It was no time for him to pause and weigh the consequences of his action. Nor could he reconcile his loyalty to the king to judicial impartiality. **No man**—no man could have acted otherwise than what I did.

97. **Expedition**—impetuosity. **Violent**—intense. **Love**—love for the dead king.

98. **Outrun**—was too quick for. **The pauser, reason**—reason which would have liked to pause and think over the matter. Before my reason had time to consider what should be done, I was carried away by my violent passion, and loyalty to the murdered king. I

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acted at once before I had time to think. **Here lay Duncan**—he makes a gesture with his hand.

99. **Silver**—siver white. **Laced**—stripped. **His silver skin laced with his golden blood**—there is meant to be an antithesis between 'silver skin, and 'golden blood.' Shakespeare put these forced and unnatural metaphors into the mouth of Macbeth, as a mark of artifice and dissimulation, to show the difference between the studied language of hypocrisy and the natural outcries of sudden passion."—*Johnson*.

100. **Gash'd stabs**—gaping wounds, caused by the dagger. **Breach in nature**—an unnatural opening into his body.

101. **For ruin's wasteful entrance**—so that death might enter and do the havoc. **Wasteful**—destructive. A transferred epithet.

102. **Steep'd in the colours of their trade**—soaked in blood. They were covered with red blood-marks, the colour of which is appropriate to professional assassins.

N. B. Tradesmen often wore distinctive costumes, or costumes of distinctive colours in order to indicate their special line of business.

103. **Unmannerly**—hideously. **Breach's with gore**—covered with blood. The metaphor may be either of breeches covering the naked limbs of a person ; so the blood formed the coating on the blade. *Nares* thinks that the expression means "having their hilts covered with blood", just as the lower end of a cannon or rifle is called its "breech", so the hilt of a dagger is its "breech". **Refrain**—restrain himself.

105. **To make's love known**—to prove that love in deeds.

98-105. (*Explanation*). **Here lay Duncan..... love known**—Macbeth seeks to justify his action in killing Duncan's grooms. Macduff turned suspiciously to him and asked him why he killed the grooms in a moment of impulse. Macbeth ptotested that when he saw Duncan lying murdered, and drenched in blood, his gaping wounds appealing to his heart, he could not restrain himself. In his close neighbourhood lay also the murderers ; soaked in blood, which seemed to proclaim them as professional assassins, and their daggers too, all stained with blood, lay by their sides. In such circumstances Macbeth could not exercise any patience or self-control. None who loves Duncan as much as he did and who had the courage to show his love in action, could have acted otherwise than what he did in the circumstances.

105. **Help me hence**—Lady Macbeth has a fainting fit come over her, and wishes to be removed from the place.

106. **Look to**—attend to.

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107. **Hold our tongues**—keep silent.

108. **That most may claim this argument for ours**—who are most entitled to speak on this matter because it is our father who has been killed, and because it is we who have suffered the worst. **Argument**—subject ; them. **For ours**—as one which concerns most.

109-10. **What should be spoken here**—it is not safe to say anything here. **Our fate**—the evil destiny awaiting us.

110-11. **Auger-hole**—dark and hidden corner. The 'auger' is the carpenter's tool for boring holes in wood. Chambers explains the auger hole "a hole made with a sharp point, as of an auger.....or a dagger." **May rush, and seize us**—the fate that has overtaken our father, may as well come upon us. Note that Donalbain at once takes in the situation. 'The two sons of Duncan cannot certainly play a part like Macbeth. They have premonition of their own peril, which cannot be anything short of their murder.

111. **Let's away**—Let us go away.

112-13. **Our tears are not yet brew'd**—it is not yet time to shed our tears. **Our**—emphatic ; contemptuous allusion to the show of grief that was being made by their host and hostess. **Brew'd**—ready to be shed as beer is ready to be drunk when fermented. It also implies the manufacturing of grief, since the grief of Macbeth and Lady Macbeth was all feigned.

114-15. **Nor our strong sorrow.....motion**—sorrow in its first strength is motionless, and cannot express itself in words or tear."—*Clark and Wright.* **Upon the foot of motion**—ready for active manifestation. **Look to the lady**—there is much difference of opinion as to whether Lady Macbeth actually fainted or was counterfeiting. Some think that Lady Macbeth's nerve gave way and that she actually fainted. It is quite likely that the collective impression of the murder might have reacted upon her spirits, overstrung as tohy were, or she might have been dismayed by Macbeth's confession of having killed the grooms, which, she was convinced, would rather fix suspicion on him. Others think that she fainted on purpose in order to create a diversion. She was aware that her husband had taken a false step in killing the grooms, and might flounder on into a worse blunder if he were allowed to speak. *Whately* says, Macbeth, by his unconcern, betrays a consciousness that the fainting is feigned.

116. **Our naked frailities hid**—dressed ourselves. **Naked**—clothed only in nightgowns. **Frailties**—frail bodies.

117. **Suffer in exposure**—suffer from being exposed to the cold, which is too bitter.

118. **Question**—investigate. **This most bloody piece of work**—this wanton and cold-blooded murder.

119. **Know It further**—find out more about the murder,

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Fear and scruples shake us—we are distracted by fear of our own safety and suspicions.

120. **In the great hand of God I stand**—I commit myself to the protection of god. **Thence**—under the protection of God.

121. **Undivulged**—secret. **Pretence**—design.

122. **Treasonous**—treasonable. **Treasonous malice**—evil-minded traitors.

120-22. **In the great hand of God...malice**—I commit myself to the care of God, who alone can protect me in this danger, and under the protection of God I pledge myself to unearth and fight the designs of the wicked traitors, who have done the king to death. **So all**—all of them take the same oath.

123. **Manly readiness**—they should dress so that they might be able to deal with the matter.

124. **Well contented**—we are all agreed.

125. **Consort with them**—associate with them ; meet them in the hall and discuss the circumstances of the murder.

126. **Show an unfelt sorrow**—feign grief which one does not feel. **Office**—task.

127. **False man**—hypocrite. **I'll to England**—I will go to England. The verb of motion is omitted.

128. **Our separated fortune**—our going to two different places.

129. **Keep us both the safer**—give us comparative safety.

128-29. **Our separated fortune.....safer**—if we are together, we run a greater risk of being murdered than if we remain apart. The idea is that if one of them is killed, the other will be alive to claim the throne, and so the purpose of the assassin would be defeated. **Where we are**—in Scotland.

130. **There 's daggers**—when the verb precedes the subject, it is often singular even though the subject is plural. **There 's daggers in men's smiles**—people who greet us with smiles, may at the same time conceal in their smiles a murderous design.

130-31. **The near in blood.....bloody**—those who are most closely related to us by ties of blood are most likely to murder us. The idea is that their danger is the greatest from those who are closely related to them by ties of blood. It is another veiled reference to Macbeth, who becomes the legitimate heir to the throne if both the sons of Duncan were dead. Butler explains : "We who are near in blood to the murdered king are in the greater danger of being murdered.

131. **This murderous shaft**—the idea is that the murder of the king is just the beginning, for it will be followed by other

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murders before the murderer can secure his object. **Shaft**—arrow.

132. **Hath not yet lighted**—has not yet come down to the ground (has not yet achieved its object).

132-33. **Our safest way is to avoid the aim**—the safest course for us to follow is to keep out of the path of the arrow. The object for which the king has been murdered has not yet been fully attained. There are still Duncan's two sons alive ; and so long as they are not put out of the way, Macbeth cannot secure the throne for himself. **To horse**—let us mount our horse and run away.

N. B. "They thus rid Macbeth of the embarrassing problem of inventing motives for the grooms' murder of Duncan ; he has only to give out that they were suborned by the fugitive princes. The accident has again befriended the Thane by at once giving plausibility to his tale, and by removing his rivals."—*Boas.*

134. **Let us not be dainty of leave-taking**—let us not bother about taking formal leave of Macbeth. **Dainty of**—scrupulous obout.

135. **Shift away**—steal away at once. **Warrant in**—justification for. **That theft**—stealing away from the castle of Macbeth.

136. **Which steals itself**—an act of stealing in which the property of others is not affected. **When there's no mercy left**—when unseen danger to our very lives lurks about in every corner : when desperate attempts may be made by unscrupulous man to kill us.

ACT II : SCENE IV

Analysis. An old man narrates his experience of the stormy night to Ross He is seventy years old, but within that period whatever dreadful hours and strange things he has encountered cannot match his experience of the last night. Ross replies that the heavens, enraged by man's sin, threatened to destroy the earth itself. Though by the hour of the clock it is day, darkness still seems to stifle the light of the sun. The old man thinks that it is as unnatural as the crime itself. On Tuesday last he saw a falcon, flying high in the air, being caught and killed by an owl. Ross relates how Duncan's horses—the most beautiful of their kind—suddenly turned wild, broke their stalls, and bolted, as if they would rush upon men. The old man heard that they had eaten each other—a report which is confirmed by Ross. Then they are joined by Macduff. Ross asks Macduff how the state of things is, and inquires whether the murderer has been detected. Macbeth tells Ross that the grooms whom Macbeth has killed are suspected to be the murderers. Ross is unable to understand what interest

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they could have in murdering the king. Macduff repeats the current version : the grooms were bribed to assassin the king, and Malcolm and Donalbian who had stolen away, are suspected to have bribed the grooms. To Ross it still seems to be meaningless and motiveless. In any case Macbeth is going to ascend the throne. Macduff informs him that Macbeth has already gone to Scone to be crowned. Ross asks him whether Macduff is going to the coronation of Macbeth. Macduff is proceeding to Fife, but Ross intends to go to Scone. Macduff now takes leave of Ross with a hint that troubles are ahead.

Critical Note. This scene does not seem to advance the action of the play. While it goes back to the prodigies which heralded the murder of Duncan, it seems to suggest the popular reaction to the new state of things. This scene also looks forward to Macduff's revolt. It lowers the tension for a moment before the second crisis. The introduction of the Old Man serves much the same purpose as that of the chorus in Greek tragedies. He represents the point of view of the average Scotchman of his day, shocked by the murder of Duncan, and having a vague suspicion of Macbeth, the new king. It is at best a pause-scene, and serves as a relief after concentrated tragedy of the last scene.

Notes and Explanations

1. **Threescore and ten**—Biblical for seventy years. **Threescore and ten I can remember well**—I can remember vividly all the incidents of seventy years.

2. **Volume**—limits.

3. **Hours dreadful and things strange**—calamitous times and unnatural incidents. **Sore**—dreadful.

4. **Trifled former knowings**—eclipsed all my previous experience in that line. **Trifled**—dwarfed. **knowings**—experiences. **Good father**—an old man is addressed as father.

5. **As troubled with man's act**—as if vexed by the misdeeds of man.

6. **Threaten**—threaten with destruction. **His bloody stage**—(1) the earth on which murders are committed : (2) the stage on which this tragedy has been enacted. **By the clock**—according to the clock. **'T is day**—the hours show that the day has broken.

7. **Strangles**—stifles. **The travelling lamp**—the Sun. The idea is that of the classical sun-god driving in a chariot across the skies.

8. **Night's predominance**—the victory of night. **The day's shame**—the defeat and humiliation of the day.

9. **Entomb**—shroud.

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10. **Living**—cheering ; life-giving.

5-9. (*Explanation*). **Thou seest, the heavens, as troubled..... .....should kiss it**—Ross comments on the aspect of the day to the old man. Unnatural darkness covers the face of the earth, when it should have been broad daylight. Ross assumes that the heavens, as if vexed by man's misdeeds, threaten the earth with destruction. The earth is bloody strange because foul murders are committed here. Though it is now full day, night seems to strifle the light of the sun. It may as well be the victory of night or the defeat and humiliation of the day. That is why darkness covers the face of the earth, when the light of the sun should enliven it.

N B. According to Holinshed, for six months after the murder of Duncan, there appeared to sun by day, nor moon by night in any part of the realm but still was the sky covered with continual cloud. The metaphor 'in predominance' is taken from astrology. One planet is said to predominate over another when its influence prevails in spite of continual influence of the second.

10. **Unnatural**—(1) contrary to what is normal ; (2) contrary to what is expected.

11. **The deed that's done**—the murder that has been committed. **Tuesday**—a realistic touch.

12. **Falcon**—a bird of prey, trained for the purpose of sport. **Towering**—rising higher and higher in the air. It is a technical term : before the hawk swoops down upon her prey, she soars high above it forming wide circles in the air. **In her pride of place**—at the highest point to which she proudly soars. The technical term for it is 'pitch.' Shakespeare often borrows terms and metaphors from falconry.

13. **Mousing**—mouse-hunting. **Hawk'd at**—preyed upon, as by a hawk.

14. **A thing most strange and certain**—a thing monstrous and about which there can be no doubt.

15. **The minions of their race**—the choicest and most highly prized specimens of their breed.

16. **Turn'd wild in nature**—became as wild and unbroken as if they were in a state of nature. **Broke their stalls**—broke down the partition between stalls separating them. The stall is the compartment allotted to each animal in a stable or a cowshed. **Flung out**—kicked and plunged violently.

17. **Contending 'gainst obedience**—refusing to obey their grooms. **As**—as if.

18. **Make war with mankind**—revolt against men who tame and bring them under subjugation. **Eat**—ate. Archaic past tense.

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19. **To the amazement of mine eyes**—causing bewilderment to me as I looked at them.

21. **How goes the world**—what are the news ? **See you not**—can you not judge for yourself ? Macduff answers evasively, because he is not sure how far he can confide in Ross.

22. **More than bloody deed**—the murder of Duncan is not only a murder but an act of treason and wanton cruelty.

23. **Those that Macbeth hath slain**—the grooms whom Macbeth has killed. While Lennox actually believed that the grooms were the murderers, Macduff hardly does so.

24. **What good could they pretend**—what interest could they have in murdering the king. **Pretend**—intend. **Suborn'd**—bribed.

26-27. **Are stol'n away**—have escaped on the sly. **Which puts upon them suspicion of the deed**—which makes them suspected of the murder. **'Gainst nature still**—that they could have murdered their father is contrary to nature.

28. **Thriftless**—wasteful. **Ravin up**—devour greedily.

29. **Thine own life's means**—the very source from which you draw your life ; the very person to whom you owe your birth. The idea is that Malcolm and Donalbain may be ambitious but their ambition seems to have acted foolishly in prompting them to kill their father.

27-29. (*Explanation*). **'Gainst nature.....life's means**—Ross inquires whether the murders of the king have been traced. Macduff replies that the king's grooms whom Macbeth has killed in a fit of indignation, are known to be murderers, and that they were bribed to do so. Further the suspicion of the murder has now fallen upon the king's two sons—Malcolm and Donalbain, because they stole away after the murder of their father. On this Ross remarks that this seems to be contrary to nature. If Malcolm and Donalbain were ambitious, their ambition must have defeated itself, by killing the king to whom they owed their birth.

30. **The sovereignty will fall upon Macbeth**—Macbeth will succeed Duncan on the throne.

31. **Named**—nominated. **Scone**—it was an anciet city that stood two miles north from the modern town of Perth. It was supposed to have been the capital of the old Pictish kingdom. It had been the residence of Scottish kings from the time of Kenneth Mc. Alpin. In this city was kept the famous stone on which the Scottish kings were crowned, and which is believed to be the very stone on which Job placed his head when he dreamed his dream in the plain of Luz. This stone was later placed inside the chair on which British monarchs sit during the coronation ceremony.

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32. **Invested**—formally installed on the throne.

33. **Colme-kill**—the modern Iona, an island of the inner Hebrides. It was the burial place for the kings of Scotland. Colme-kill or Incolme-kill or Columb-kill means the cell of St. Columba.

34. **Storehouse**—burial vault. **Predecessors**—ancestors.

35. **Guardian of their bones**—Iona is supposed to contain the tombs of as many as 48 Scottish kings. **Will you to Scone**—the verb of motion is omitted here.

36. **I will thither**—Ross is proceeding to Scone to witness the coronation of Macbeth.

37. **May you see things well done there**—I hope you will enjoy participating in the coronation festivities at Scone.

38. **Lest our old robes sit easier than our new**—I am afraid that the present stage of things may be less comfortable to us than the past. Macduff hints that more perilous times are ahead.

40. **Benision**—blessing.

41. **Make good of bad**—turn evil into good.

ACT III : SCENE I

Analysis—The Scene opens with Banquo's soliloquy. He now thinks that all the predictions of the Witches concerning Macbeth have been fulfilled. But he suspects Macbeth to have achieved his ambition by most unfair and unscrupulous means, by treachery. The crown, as it has been predicted, will pass away from him, and descend to Banquo's own children. As the predictions of the witches have been fulfilled in the case of Macbeth, he may well believe that the prediction about him will also come true. His soliloquy is interrupted by the entrance of Macbeth as king and Lady Macbeth as queen, accompanied by Lennox, Ross, Lords and Ladies.

Macbeth greets Banquo as the chief guest. Both Macbeth and Lady Macbeth invite Banquo to the feast to be given that night. Then Macbeth inquires whether he is going out for a ride otherwise Macbeth desired his assistance in the day's council. Banquo promises to come back early ; at the latest it may be an hour or two after evening. Macbeth speaks of his cousins (sons of the murdered king), one of whom has fled to England and the other to Ireland. But they have not confessed their crime ; they have been telling the people their strange stories. However, Macbeth will take up this matter tomorrow in council. Macbeth also asks whether Fleance goes with Banquo. Banquo now takes leave of Macbeth. Macbeth dismisses all except an attendant.

There are two fellows waiting outside to see Macbeth. He sends for them. In the meantime Macbeth soliloquises. He stands

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in fear of Banquo, and there is good reason to fear him for his king-like nature. With his fearlessness he unites great wisdom which will enable him to act safely and cautiously. He is ill at ease so long as Banquo lives, then he remembers the prediction of the witches about Banquo's children succeeding to the throne. The crown will pass away from him, and no son of his will succeed him. If it be so, then it is for the benefit of Banquo's children that he has sacrificed his innocence, and poisoned his peace of mind by murdering Duncan. Rather than permit Banquo's children to succeed to the throne, he would challenge fate.

Now the attendant re-enters with two murderers. Macbeth sends the attendants to wait outside the door. It appears that Macbeth had a talk with the murders yesterday. Now he asks them whether they have thought over the matter. Macbeth tried to convince them that it was not he, but Banquo, who reduced them to hard straits. Now Macbeth wants to know whether they will like to submit to Banquo's unjust treatment. He further incites them by a speech in which he impresses on them that if they are truly men, or if they have the men-like spirit in them they cannot but avenge the wrongs done to them. Both the murderers express their readiness to do anything, however desperate, to retrieve their fortunes. Now Macbeth tells them that Banquo is as much his enemy as theirs, and that he could have no peace of mind so long as Banquo is alive. By exercise of his kindly power he might have removed Banquo, but in the interest of certain common friends he would rather let it not appear that he had anything to do with the removal of Banquo. That is the reason why he seeks their assistance. The two murderers close in with the bargain. Macbeth promises to send them proper instructions as to where they should lie in ambush and at what time they should be ready to act, for the murder must be done this very night, a little away from the palace. He also insists that business must be throughly performed, which means that his son, Fleance, should not be spared. He dismisses the murderers, but promises to send for them again soon.

Critcal Note. The scene has a great psychological interest. Macbeth has changed much for the worse ; the hardening by crime has already been wrought in him. His conscience has been stilled, and even his imagination seems to have gone to sleep. At the same time it should be noted that it is normal life that Macbeth has been living. He has been passing through a terrible nervous tension. He overtakes his own spirits, and even his physical endurance. He is already desperate. He begins to feel that he can secure his crown only by heaping crime on crime. In any case he must give no breathing while to conscience or to remorse. He is now rushing blindly on his fate.

"The crisis, which commonly occupies the Third Act, is already past ; but the counter-stroke is not yet, ready to fall. The

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Interval is filled, and the tension maintained, by the murder of Banquo, which in its instantaneous effect on Macbeth's mind and fortunes, is also the first wave in the reaction."—*Grierson.*

Notes and Explanations

1. **Thou hast it now**—all your ambition has been fulfilled.

2. **Weird women**—the witches who have acted with the power of destiny. **Promised**—predicted.

3. **Thou paly'dst most foully for't**—you were guilty of treachery for the crown which you have secured. **It was said**—it was predicted by the witches.

4. **It should not stand in the posterity**—the crown would not descend to your chidren.

5-6. **Myself should be.....kings**—from me would come the future generation of the kings of Scotland. **It there come truth from them**—if their predictions have any element of truth in them, or are fulfilled.

7. **As upon thee**—as they have been fulfilled in your case. **Their speeches shine**—tneir predictions have crowned you with success.

8. **Verities**—truths. **On thee made good**—fulfilled in your case.

9. **May they not be my oracles as well**—Should I not trust to them in my case. Oracles were seats of worship of special divinities, where prophecies were uttered by divine sanction. The word was also applied to the response obtained by people who sought the aid of those deities. The most famous oracles in ancient Greece were those of Appollo at Delphi and of Zeus at Dodone.

10. **Set me up in hope**—encourage me to hope. **But hush**—he cuts short his soliloquy as Macbeth enters.

STAGE DIRECTION. **Sennet**—a set of notes played on a trumpet as the signal for the approach or departure of processions.

11. **If he had been forgotten**—if we had forgotten to invite Banquo.

12. **Had been**—would have been. **Gap**—(1) vacant seat : (2) a striking omission.

13. **All-thing**—altogether. **Unbecoming**—unseemly.

14. **Solemn supper**—a ceremonial festival, and court banquet.

15. **Request your presence**—Macbeth makes a formal invitation to Banquo.

16. **Command upon**—issue a command on.

16-18. **To the which my duties.....knit**—to carry out your command it is a duty of mine, which is ever binding upon me.

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Indissoluble—not to be loosened. **Knit**—bound. "Banquo feels obliged to invent fair words to conceal his secret. The hypocrite Macbeth is served with hypocrisy."

20. **Else**—if you had arranged to go out for a ride in the afternoon.

21. **Still**—always. **Grave**—deserving serious consideration. **Prosperous**—beneficial to us.

22. **Take**—take your advice.

25. **Supper**—the supper time is 7 P. M. **Go not my horse the better**—if my horse is slow-footed.

26-27. **I must become borrower.....twain**—it must be an hour or two after evening that I can return. **Fail not our feast**—do not fail to attend our feast.

28. **My lord, I will not**— *N. B.* It is prophetic. Not Banquo but his ghost keeps the appointment. There is unconscious tragic irony.

29. **Bloody**—blood-guilty. **Cousins**—Malcolm and Donalbain. **Are bestow'd**—have taken refuge.

31. **Parricide**—murder of their own father.

32. **Strange invention**—wild, concocted stories. Macbeth alludes to the accusations against him. **But of that to-morrow**—We can discuss this matter to-morrow.

33. **Therewithal**—In addition to that. **Cause of state**—state affairs ; public questions.

34. **Craving us jointly**—demanding a consultation between us. **Hie**—hasten. **You**—yourself.

35. **Goes Fleance with you**—Macbeth wants to make sure whether Banquo's son is accompanying him. His plan is to get both father and son murderded so that he may have no enemy alive, who can endanger his throne.

36. **Our time does call upon's**—it is time we started.

37. **I wish your horses.....foot**—may your horses carry you swiftly and surely back again.

38. **And so I do commend you totheir backs**—"and with these good wishes I bid you mount."

40. **Let every man... time**—let every man spend his time as he pleases.

41-42. **To make society the sweeter welcome**—to make the company or guests at the state banquet all the more welcome. **We will keep ourself**—I intend to be alone.

43. **God be with you**—good-by.

44. **Sirrah**—a word ordinarily used in addressing inferiors.

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44-45. **Attend those men our pleasure**—are those fellows waiting outside to see me ? Macbeth has hired to murderers to get rid of Banquo and his son.

46. **Without**—outside.

47. **To be thus is nothing**—to wear the crown, when it is attended by so much peril and so little peace of mind is meaningless.

48. **But to be safely thus**—unless I can sit safely on the throne ; or to sit safely on the throne is all that matters.

49. **Stick deep**—are deep-rooted. **Royalty of nature**—kingly nobleness of character.

50. **Reigns.....fear'd**—has a prevailing quality which one ought to fear. **'T is much he dares**—he can undertake much.

51. **Dauntless temper of his mind**—fearlessness.

52. **Guide his valour**—direct his bravery.

53. **To act in safety**—to act safely and cautiously.

47-53. (*Explanation*). **To be thus is nothing.....to act in safety**—This is part of Macbeth's soliloquy. He has now succeeded to the throne, but he has little peace of mind, and he seems to be surrounded by perils on every side. To be king on such terms is meaningless. But if he could be king without the fear of being deposed or hurt by an unseen enemy, it would be certainly worth while. He cannot dismiss the thought of Banquo. Banquo has a king-like disposition, and, therefore, he ought to be feared. His valour may carry him to any daring enterprise. With his valour he unites discretion ; discretion will guide his valour and enable him to act safely and cautiously.

53. **Whose being I do fear**—whose existence is a constant menace to me. **Under him**—while I live in fear of him.

55. **Genius**—"The Italian people regarded the Genius as a higher power which creates and maintains life, assists at the begetting and brith of every individual man, determines his character, tries to influence his destiny for good, accompanies him through life as his tutelary spirit. The Genius wishes a man to have pleasure in the life he has given him. And so the Romans spoke of enjoying oneself as of indulging one's genius and of renunciation as spiting him"—*Seyffert*. **My genius is rebuked**—my guardian spirit is childed ; my personality feels dwarfed.

56. **Mark Antony's was by Caesar**—Marcus Antonius (83-30 B. C.) was the Roman Triumvir and consul. After the assasination of Julius, he became the most powerful man in Rome. But he could not pull on well with Octavius Caesar. He went to Egypt where he led a life of indolence and vice, having been captivated by the beauty of Cleopatra, the dethorned queen of Egypt. Antony was defeated by Octavius at the naval battle of Actium. Antony's

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genius was eclipsed by Caesar's. Caesar was Octavius Caesar, the first Roman emperor (63 B. C.-14 A. D.)

53-56 (*Explanation*). **There is none but he whose being.....was by Caesar**—Macbeth speaks here of Banquo, whom he dreads as his rival. He does not bother about any other courtier of his. But he can have no peace of mind so long as Banquo is alive. His guardian spirit seems to be cowed by Banquo's. He feels his personality being dwarfed by Banquo's. It is not unlike the case between Antony and Octavius. Antony did not feel at ease in the presence of Octavius, and was always haunted by the dread of his rivalry. In fact Macbeth cannot feel at ease so long as Banquo is alive. The greatest danger to his throne comes from Banquo, and not from anybody else.

56. **Chid**—rebuked. **Sisters**—the three witches.

57. **Put the name of king upon me**—greeted me as the future king.

58. **Prophet-like**—with the gift of prophecy.

59. **Hail'd him father of a line of kings**—greeted him as the father of a generation of kings.

60. **Fruitless crown**—crown that will not descend to any children.

61. **Barren sceptre**—a sceptre that will pass away from my hands. **Gripe**—grasp.

62. **Wrench'd**—forcibly taken away. **With**—by. **Unlineal hand**—the hand of a person not descended from me.

63. **No son of mine succeeding**—the crown not descending to a son of mine. **If't be so**—if Banquo's children are to become kings after me.

64. **For Banquo's issue**—for the benefit of Banquo's children. **Filed**—defiled. **Filed my mind**—sacrificed my innocence ; parted with my virtue.

65. **For them**—for their benefit. **Gracious**—good-hearted : virtuous.

66. **Put rancours in the vessel of my peace**—poisoned the peace of mind by my crime. **Rancours**—malignant hate. **Vessel of my peace**—the metaphor is taken from the sacramental cup.

67. **Eternal jewel**—immortal soul.

68. **Given to the common enemy of man**—have I surrendered to Satan.

69. **The seed of Banquo**—the children of Banquo.

70. **Rather than so**—rather than led the children of Banquo enjoy the benefit of my crime. **Come fate into the list**—I shall defy

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fate. **List**—the enclosed gound where a tournament used to take place.

71. **Champion me to the utterance**—challenge me to fight you to the death. Each of the two persons engaged in a combat was called a champion, because each represented a particular cause. **To the utterance**—to the bitter end.

64-71. (*Explanation.*) **For Banquo's issue have I filed.....to the utterance**—Macbeth is not at all happy after becoming king. The prophecy of the witches regarding him has been fulfilled ; so too the prophecy regarding Banquo may come true. Then it is for the benefit of Banquo's children that he has sacrificed his virtue and honour, and poisoned his peace of mind by murdering the good-hearted Duncan. For the benefit of Banquo's children has he endangered his soul. He has committed the crime to make Banquo's children the kings of Scotland. Now he has grown desperate. Rather than let Banquo's children reap the benefit of his crime, he will defy fate : he will rather meet fate in a death-grapple.

72. **We**—the royal plural.

75. **Consider'd of my speeches**—thought over the matter we have talked about.

76-77. **Held you so under fortune**—kept you in a position of subjugation ; gave you no chance to develop in your own pay. **Which**—who.

78. **Our innocent self**—myself who have nothing to do with keeping you out of your due. **Made good**—demonstrated.

79. **Conference**—conversation. **Pass'd in probation with you**—(1) which was employed in proving to you ; (2) and I proved to you point by point. **Probation**—proof.

80. **Borne in hand**—deluded with false hopes. **Cross'd**—thwarted. **Instruments**—plans formed by him.

81. **Who wrought with them**—the agents employed in carrying out these plans.

82. **Half a soul**—even the most dull-spirited person. **Notion crazed**—a half-witted person. **Notion**—understanding mind.

83. **Thus did Banquo**—this is what Banquo has done to ruin me.

78-83. (*Explanation.*) **This I made good to you.....thus did Banquo**—Macbeth addresses the two murderers whom he has engaged to murder Banquo and his son. He had a talk with them yesterday, when he clearly proved to them that it was Banquo, and not he himself, who was responsible for having kept them in subjugation. He proved to them point by point what he had done to foil them ; how he deluded them with false hopes, and how, as

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days passed, those hopes did not materialise. He had explained to them also the plans adopted by him to gain his end and also the agents employed by him to carry out those plans. These details ought to convince them how they were let down by Banquo, even if they were most dull-spirited or weakest in intelligence. They could not but realise that Banquo was responsible for all their past misery and hardship.

84. **And went further**—gave you a hint as to how I wanted to proceed against Banquo.

85. **Our point.....meeting**—the issue that brings us to-gether now. **Find**—after considering what I have told you of the wrongs inflicted to you by Banquo.

86. **Your patience so predominant in your nature**—you find yourselves so meek and, submissive (as not to resist evil). **Patience**—ability to suffer. **Predominant**—prevailing.

87. **That you.....go**—that you would not seize this opportunity of revenge. **Gospell'd**—deeply imbued with the spirit of the Gospel teachings. The Gospel is the record of Christ's life and sayings, recorded in the first four books of the New Testament ; it is also applied generally to he Christian revelation.

88. **To pray**—so as to pray. **This good man**—ironical—Banquo i s mean. **Issue**—children.

89. **Whose heavy hand.....grave**—whose machinations have brought you near death.

90. **Beggar'd**—reduced to poverty. **yours**—your children. **We are men**—we possess the desire of revenge, which is natural to men. **My leige**—Your Majesty.

91. **In the catologue.....men**—you are counted as men, but mere human shape does not make a man. **In the catalogue**—in the list of human beings. **Go for**—pass as.

92. **As**—just as. **Hounds**—hunting dogs, *e. g.*, blood hound, staghound, foxhound, etc. **Greyhounds**—a swift, slender, and graceful species of hunting dogs, with long legs and capacious chest. **Mongrels**—cross-breeds dogs. **Spaniels**—there are several species of dogs of this name ; the particular characteristics are long, waving, and curled hair, long ears and bushy tail. **Curs**—worthless, ugly dogs.

93. **Shoughs**—dogs with rough and shaggy hair. **Water-rugs**—rough haired water-dogs. **Demi-wolves**—a cross breed between the wolf and the dog. **Clept**—called. The word became obsolete even in Shakespeare's time. The form 'clept' survived till the seventeenth century.

94. **All by the mnae of dogs**—the idea is that these different species of dogs, whatever their distinction and their differentiating attributes, are all lumped together as dogs. So these are men and

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men ; all men are not alike, and some men hardly deserve to be called men. **Valued**—value-describing. **The valued file**—the list settled forth the relative worth of each species of dogs.

95. **Distinguishes**—differentiates. **Subtle**—cunning.

96. **Housekeeper**—watch dog.

97. **Gift**—special qualities. **Bounteous**—generous.

98. **Hath in him closed**—has endowed it with as its portion.

99. **Particular addition**—a distinctive sub-title. **From**—marking it off from. **Bill**—list.

100. **That.....alike**—which describes them all as dogs. **So of men**—men in name only and men worthy of being so called.

101. **A station in the file**—a definite place among the various groups and classes of men.

102. **Not i' the worst.....manhood**—not absolutely the dregs of society. **Rank**--grade. The idea is : If you claim to be human beings with some assured position in society and possess qualities that place you above the worst specimens of humanity ; if you have any self-respect at all. **Say it**--prove it by doing what I suggest.

103. **Put that business in your bosoms**—confide to you an undertaking.

104. **Whose execution**—the accomplishment of which. **Takes your enemy off**—remove your enemy (Banquo) from your pathway.

105. **Grapples you.....us**=secure to you the best of our affection and interest. **Grapples you**—binds you fast. **Heart and love of us**—my sincerest love.

106. **Who wear.....life**—who cannot breath in peace and comfort so long as he lives. **Who**—antecedent to 'us'. **Wear..... sickly**—have an indifferent health, health no better than that of a sick man. **In his life**—during his lifetime.

107. **Which.....perfect**—*i. e.*, our health (our safety) would be perfect when he was no more.

101-07. (*Explanation.*) **Now, if you have a station.....perfect**—Macbeth works up, the feelings of the two murderers. He has represented to them that Banquo was entirely responsible for their misery. If they were really men, and not so in name only, then they, as Macbeth expects, would not submit to the wrongs—they must retaliate. Let them declare that they are men in reality, not in name only and that they would avenge the wrongs. Then Macbeth would entrust them with the undertaking which would remove their enemy (Banquo) at once. By accomplishing this business they would win too Macbeth's love and friendship, for Macbeth himself, as he tells them, has no peace of mind, no secu-

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rity so long as Banquo lives. It is to the interest of both, Macbeth and the two fellows (whom he has hired for the murder), that Banquo should cease to be. Of this Macbeth convinces the two murderers.

107. **I am one**—I an a man.

108. **Vile blows .....world**—hand knocks of adversity ; rough usages of the world and suffering and hardship to which he has been subjected. **Vile**—evil. **Buffets**—originally, blow with the hand.

109. **Incensed**—embittered. **Am reckless**—do not care.

110. **To spite the world**—to avenge myself upon the world.

111. **Weary with disasters**—indifferent to what happens as a result of a long series of misfortunes. **Tugg'd**—dragged hither and thither ; buffeted about. **With**—by. **Tuggd's with fortune**—"so hauled about my fortune in my attempts to grapple with her."—*Schmidt* ; so "worsted in the wrestle with fortune."—*Grierson.*

112. **Set.....chance**—risk my life.

113. **Mend it**—improve the prospects of life. **Be rid on't**—get rid of it. **On't**—of it.

115. **Bloody distance**—murderous antagonism ; hostility so bitter as to give rise to thoughts of murder. **Distance**—the metaphor is from fencing, where 'distance' is the measured space between the two combatants ; but the idea in 'distance' here is 'discord' 'alienation.'

116. **Every.....being**—every minute he continues to live.

116-17. **Thrusts.....life**—(1) threatens to stab me in the heart ; (2) threatens my most vital interests. **My nears't of life**—what is nearest to my life. The literal sense is 'my most vital part' ; the figurative, 'that which I cannot live'.

118. **Bare-faced**—undisguised. **With bare-faced power**—by openly exercising my arbitrary powers as king. **Sweep.....sight** remove him from my path.

119. **And bid.....it**—and for taking such an extreme step, offer no better justification than that I asking desired it. **Avouch**—justify.

120. **For**—in the interest of.

121. **Whose loves.....drop**—whose friendship I cannot discard. **But wail**—but I must bewail.

121-22. **His fall who**—the downfall of him whom.

123. **Struck down**—caused to be executed. **Thence**—because of this reason.

123. **To your assistance.....love**—solicit your assistance

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124. **Masking**—concealing. **Business**—euphemism for 'murder'. **The common eye**—public knowledge.

125. **Sundry**—several. **Weighty**—important.

115. (*Explanation*). **So is he mine.....weighty reasons**—Macbeth explains to the murderers the reasons why he cannot proceed openly against Banquo. In virtue of his arbitrary powers he could have easily got rid of Banquo. There are certain common friends who must not be alienated. If he had Banquo openly executed, he would have to regret the matter. So he sought the assistance of the murderers, and had to decide on Banquo's secret removal. So long as Banquo was alive, he could have neither peace of mind nor safety. Every minute of Banquo's existence was a threat to his own life and to his most vital interests. He had demonstrated to the murderers that Banquo had been their deadly enemy. Now he told them that Banquo was also his deadly enemy. So the secret murder of Banquo was to the interest of both.

126. **Though our lives**—though our lives may be endangered.

127. **Your spirits.....you**—now you show yourselves to be men of spirit by agreeing to act according to my plan. **At most**—at the latest.

128. **Advise**—instruct. **Plant**—station.

129. **Acquaint.....time**—(1) inform you, by means of the best-informed spy, of the time when you may expect Banquo ; (2) inform you of the result of the most accurate observation of Banquo's movements so that you may select the best time for the murder ; (2) communicate to you the results of careful observation of all the circumstances.

130. **On't**—of it ; of the time or of the deed.

131. **Something from the palace**—at some distance from the palace so that no suspicion may fall on me. **Something**—somewhat. **From**—away from. **Always thought**—it being always thought.

132. **I require a clearness**—I demand that no suspicion should ever touch me in this matter. **Clearness**—freedom from suspicion. **With him**—along with him.

133. **To leave**—in order that we might leave. **Rubs**—unevenness of the surface of a bowling green, which causes obstruction to the rolling bowls ; hence imperfections. **Botches**—clumsy patches ; hence bungling. **To leave.....work**—so that there might not be any blemish or bungling in the work you are undertaking—which might give rise to unpleasant consequences later. Macbeth insinuates that Fleance should be murdered with Banquo. He is out to defy fate and will take steps to keep Banquo's children out of the throne of Scotland.

134. **Keeps him company**—accompanies him.

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135-36. **Whose absence.....father's**—whose removal is essential to my peace of mind and safety as his father's. **Material**—important. **Embrace the fate**—share his father's fate (*i. e.*,) be murdered with his father).

137. **Dark hour**—the hour of murder which is to take place after nightfall. **Resolve yourselves apart**—make up your minds between yourselves (in my absence).

138. **Anon**—soon. **We are resolved**—we have made up our minds.

139. **Call upon**—send for. **Straight**—immediately. **Abide within**—stay within the palace compound.

140. **It is concluded**—the matter is settled. These words are addressed to the audience. **Thy soul's flight**—the parting of your soul from body when it will either go to heaven or hell.

ACT III : SCENE II

Analysis. Lady Macbeth is disillusioned. Her desire has been attained, but it has brought no contentment. But she is no less concerned about Macbeth's behaviour. She complains to Macbeth why he is keeping alone, wrapt in sorry fancies. But Macbeth tells her that there can be no peace of mind until the danger is totally eliminated. "We have scotch'd the snake, not kill'd it". But he is not going to trifle with his occasion—he must secure himself against his risk. This life of suspense and uncertainty is no life at all. Duncan is now quite happy. "After life's fitful fever he sleeps well." Lady Macbeth begs him to smooth his features, and play the genial host among his guests. Macbeth realizes that such should be his proper role—he must keep everybody in good humour until he sits on the throne. The worst of it is there can be no peace of mind for him so long as Banquo and his son are alive. But he bids Lady Macbeth be merry for ere long "a deed of dreadful note" will be accomplished. He will not let her know at present what the deed is. She will have time to commend it after it is done. He invokes night to cancel the bond that keeps him pale. Night is approaching when "good things of day begin to droop and drowse." Lady Macbeth cannot make out what her husband means. Let her but hold herself in patience, and she will have reason to rejoice soon.

Critical Note. It is a brief encounter between Macbeth and his wife. Lady Macbeth appears to be disillusioned. The murder of the king has given Macbeth the throne, but no peace of mind and no sense of security. But he has sufficiently pulled himself together. He is quite self-composed after having arranged the murder of Banquo. "Things had begun make strong themselves by ill"—so murder again must cement the throne he has secured.

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There can be no other policy for him now. But one thing may be noted. Macbeth is alone. He has planned the murder of Banquo without consulting Lady Macbeth. Lady Macbeth is no more to be his associate in crime. They are spiritually drifting apart. The scene does not carry the action forward ; it shows the change in the mental outlook of the King and Queen. Both are haunted by the nightmare of the crime—the risk and insecurity of their position. "After life's fitful fever he sleeps well"—that is an agonising cry from Macbeth.

Notes and Explanations

1. **Is Banquo.....court**—Banquo haunts the thoughts of Macbeth and his wife. They can have no peace of mind and sense of security until Banquo is dispatched.

3. **Would attend**—am awaiting.

4. **For**—in order to speak with him. **Nought's had**—we have achieved nothing (by the murder of Duncan). **All's spent**—we have sacrified everything—peace of mind and an untroubled conscience.

5. **Where**—in those instances in which. **Our desire..... content**—our desire is satisfied without bringing contentment. Lady Macbeth is now disillusioned. The throne is not worth having at such a cost—the cost of peace and innocence. She has been suffering a great anguish of spirit, but she keeps it all to herself. Her self-repression will have untoward results later. Now she sustained herself by her pride, and her love for her husband.

6. **That which we destroy**—the person whom we kill. **"By destruction**—after having committed a murder. **Doubtful joy**—happiness marred by suspence and insecurity. **Doubtful**—apprehensive.

6-7. (*Explanation*). **'Tis safer to be.....joy**—The suspense and uncertainty of the position were weighing upon Lady Macbeth's spirits. Now she envies Duncan who is safe in his grave. Nothing has been gained by Duncan's murder. They are now in a worst state than before. The same thought occurs to both ; rather Lady Macbeth seems to anticipate'. Macbeth —After life's fitful fever he sleeps well' —that's Duncan. And they are in for trouble, instability confusion. But there is again a difference between Lady Macbeth and Macbeth ; but he distracts remorse with action, her desolation sinks inward ; "minding all within."—*Grierson.*

8. **Why do .....alone**—as partners in guilt, they have not dared to look each other in the face ; that is why Lady Macbeth has sent for her husband.

9. **Of sorriest fancies.....making**—brooding over morbid thoughts. **Sorriest**—saddest.

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10. **Using those thoughts.....on**—being a prey to those gloomy thoughts which should have been banished with those who are now no more. **Using**—brooding over. **Died**—perished.

11. **With them.....on**—with those who are no more, and with whom they were concerned. **Without all remedy**—for which there is no help.

12. **Should.....regard**—should not be thought of. The idea is : "What cannot be cured, must be endured." What's **done, is done**—the act cannot be undone.

13. **Scotch'd**—cut with narrow incision ; inflicted a slight wound on. **We have.....kill'd it**—the murder of Duncan has been but a beginning, it has barely given us the throne, but we are still best with peril which threatens our very throne and existence.

14. **She'll.....herself**—the snake will soon recover from the wound, and be as dangerous as before. *N. B.* Theobald sees in it a reference to the popular belief that the dismembered parts of a snake would join again, if placed together. The idea is that though Duncan is killed, his sons and friends are alive and that if they act together they would be able to avenge the King's death. **Poor**—feeble. **Malice**—power to do harm.

15. **Her former tooth**—her tooth as venomous as it was before she was scotched.

13-15. (*Explanation.*) **We have scotch'd.....tooth**—The murder of Duncan has placed him on the throne, but his position is far from secure. The king has been killed, but his sons and his friends may combine against him and depose him. The danger is now greater than ever. So he says that the snake has been slighly wounded, but not killed. The odds are against him still.

16. **Frame of things**—the structure of the universe. **disjoint**—go to pieces ; dissolve. **Both the worlds**—heaven and earth. **Suffer**—perish. Macbeth means that he will risk all—the damnation of his soul even to secure the possession of his throne.

17. **Ere**—before. **Ere we will.....fear**—rather than live in such constant fear as to be unable to enjoy life in the least.

18. **In the affliction.....dreams**—oppressed by nightmares. These words seem to anticipate 'Lady Macbeth' night-walking scenes.

19. **Shake us**—cause us to shiver. **Nightly**—at night. **Better .....dead**—it is better to share the peaceful sleep and oblivion of the dead.

20. **To gain our.....peace**—to set our minds at ease by the fulfilment of our ambition. **Sent to peace**—euphemism for 'killed'. **Peace** here is the peace of the grave.

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21. **On the torture...lie**—to be subject to mental anguish.

22. **Restless**—without respite. **Ecstasy**—frenzy. 'Ecstasy' meant every species of alienation of mind, whether temporary or permanent, proceeding from joy, sorrow, wonder or any other exciting cause.

16-22. (*Explanation*). **But let the frame of things.....ecstasy**—Macbeth is now grown desperate. He has gained the throne by murder, but it is a hard job to keep it. So he will stick at nothing : he will risk even the damnation of his soul. Since he became King, he has never known a moment of peace, every night he has been afflicted by nightmares. Rather than live in such constant fear of losing the throne, he would stake all, defy both worlds, be a dare-devil. To-gain his ambition he has killed the King. The King sleeps in peace in the grave and he (Macbeth) sitting on the throne trembles every moment in fear of losing it, and has his sleep at night, broken by bad dreams.

23. **Life's fitful fever**—the restlessness, the excitement, the cares and anxieties of life. **Fitful**—(1) marked by fits of activity—as applied to life ; (2) intermittent—as applied to fear. **Sleeps well**—sleeps peacefully in his grave.

24. **Treason.....worst**—he can suffer no more from treason. Macbeth must have been thinking of his own treason to Duncan—and also of treason that may raise its head against him. Duncan's fate may be his own—that is the worst of his fears. **His**—its. **Steel** sword.

25. **Malice domestic**—enmity of his own subject. **Foreign levy**—invasion by foreign troops.

26. **Touch**—affect. **Come on**—pull yourself together.

27. **Gentle my lord**—this word—order is common when the possessive adjective is unemphatic. **Sleek o'er**—smooth down. **Rugged look**—features wrought on by passion.

28. **Bright**—cheerful and witty. **Jovial**—merry. 'Jovial' means, in astrology, born under the influence of Jupiter which is supposed to be most benign among the planets.

30. **Let your remembrance.....Banquo**—pay particular attention to Banquo.

31. **Present him.....tongue**—both by your looks and words make it clear that you hold him in particularly high esteem. Banquo is to be treated as the chief guest. **Present him eminence**—pay homage to his superiority.

32. **Unsafe**—we being unsafe.

33. **Lave**—bathe. **Lave our honours**—try to maintain our royal dignity. **In these flattering streams**—by submitting to the humiliation of flattering such influential persons as Banquo.

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34-35. **Make our faces.....are**—wear looks that would conceal our real feelings. **Vizards**—masks.

32-35. (*Explanation*). **Unsafe the while.....they are**—Macbeth explains to his wife why it was necessary, though humiliating, to flatter Banquo, so long as they could not make sure of their position. They were best with peril which might rob them of the very throne which they had won by their crime. They would have to carry favour with such man as Banquo until they had got rid of all, those who could give them trouble. In the meantime, they must wear hypocritical looks which might never betray their feelings.

35. **You.....this**—you must not talk in this wild manner ; you should not let yourself be a prey to such morbid fancies. **Compare**—"These deeds must not be thought after these ways."—II. ii 32-33.

36. **Full of scorpions..... mind**—I am being as painfully afflicted by my thoughts as if I were being constantly stung by scorpions. A scorpion is a venomous reptile with a long stinging tail. Compare : My father chastised you with whips, but I will chastise you with scorpions."—I Kings, XII. ii.

37. **His**—his son. **Thou know'st.....lives**—so long as Banquo and his son Fleance are alive, my mind will be in a perpetual torment.

N. B. Macbeth makes a veiled allusion to what he has done. For dramatic purposes, it is necessary for Lady Macbeth to be at least able to guess that Banquo has been murdered at her husband's instigation ; otherwise she will be unable to keep her nerve in the ghost scene that is to follow.

38. **But in them nature's copy's not eterne**—(1) But they are not going to live for ever : as soon as they die, our nightmare will be at an end. The metaphor is a legal one—the idea : "the copy, the lease, by which they hold their lives from nature, has its time of termination limited—they have not a permanent lease of life, they are not immortal. (Is it not a subtle suggestion by Lady Macbeth that Banquo and Fleance should be done away with ?) Copyhold or tenure of land by copy, is a tenure for which the tenant can show no better proof than the *copy of the rolls*, made by the steward of the lord of the manor ; originally, the tenure was terminable at the will of the landlord, according to the custom of the manor, and of the tenant's death the land reverted to the landlord instead of passing on to the heirs of the tenant. **Nature's copy**—the copyhold right obtained from nature. **Eterne**—eternal ; permanent. (2) 'Nature's copy is also explained as the human form, created after the image of the Deity. There is no point in saying that there is no hint of

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murder in words of Lady Macbeth, as some commentators insist. Surely Lady Macbeth is not comforting Macbeth with the thought that Banquo and Fleance will die in a natural course. Macbeth could not be expected to survive Fleance—not to speak of the life of uneasy and restless torment until Banquo and Fleance were out of the way. On the other hand, Macbeth can make good the title of his heirs to the throne if they were murdered.

39. **There's comfort yet**—Lady Macbeth's hint is not lost on her husband. The comfort, conveyed in Lady Macbeth's subtle hint, has already been seized upon by Macbeth : yet there is anxiety whether the murders might not bungle.

N. B. Is there not a premonition in Macbeth's mind ? And the premonition comes true for Fleance escapes being murdered.

39. **Assailable**—vulnerable : mortal. The legal metaphor is kept up : a claim or document is 'assailable' when there is some flaw in it.

40. **Jocund**—merry.

41. **Cloister'd**—cloisters are covered passages round a quadrangle in a college, or monastry. **To**—in obedience to. **Hecates**—goddess of witchcraft.

42. **Shard-borne**—enable to fly by shards *i.e* , scaly wing-cases, 'Beetle' is a term, applied to those insects, which are covered with a "strong horny substance and have the abdominal part of their body, guarded by two sheaths ('shards') under which the wings are folded. 'Shard' should not be taken to mean the wing, for as Grierson points out, "the open wing-cases assist the flight and produce the hum." "Sharde-borne' has also been explained as born and burrowing in hung—'borne' being an old spelling of *born*, and 'shard' in the northern dialect being *dung*. But this interpretation spoils a picturesque epithet. **His**—its. **Drowsy**—sleep-inducing. **Hums**—plural because the hum is a shriek of disconnected noises.

43. **Hath rung.....peal**—has tolled the nightly curfew, which is the summons to slumber. **Yawning**—causing one to yawn *i.e.*, feel sleepy. **Peal**—perhaps a reference to the curfew bell, rung, at nightfall.

44. **Or dreadful note**—of startling notoriety. **A deed..... note**—the deed refers to the murder of Banquo and Fleance. But there is now a widening gulf between Macbeth and his wife and he cannot confide fully in his wife. **What's to be done**—what is going to be done ?

45. **Be innocent of the knowledge**—do no bother to know. **Chuck**—a term of endearment (somewhat coarse). It is a variant of 'chick.'

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N. B. "Unintentionally and unconsciously here breathes from Macbeth's soul an echo of that happier time when the mutual esteem of a heroic pair was accompanied by the delicate attentions of first love.....Ambition has caused their love for each other to cool until we see them united solely in a fiendish alliance in pursuit of an ambitious end—so here this love, grown cold, was recorded in the murder of the king, and the tenderness in this scene is naught but a dirge, rising unconscious from the soul over the sentiments of an earlier time."—*Hiecke.*

46. **Till thou.....deed**—till the deed (murder) is done and you commend me for having it done. **Seeling**—blinding. A metaphor from falconry : *to seel is* to close up the eyelids of a hawk by passing a fine thread through it, in order to tame it.

47. **Scarf up**—completely blindfold. **Tender**—(1) sensitive to deeds of cruelty ; (a) compassionate. **Tender eye.....day**—because crimes are generally committed at night, the day is supposed to have a special abhorrence for them and to pity their victims. Lady Macbeth's invocation to night precedes the murder of Duncan : Macbeth's precedes the murder of Banquo.

48. **Bloody**—night's hands are bloody because deeds of violence are committed at night. **Invisible**—because murderers like to strike in the dark.

49. **Cancel**—annul (render invalid by crossing out). **That great bond**—(1) The tenure by which Banquo and Fleance hold their lives. A resumption of the legal metaphor in 'nature's copy' above. (2) the decree of Fate, by which the house of Banquo is to inherit the throne. This gives a better sense to 'great', and psychologically is more relevant.

50. **Which.....pale**—which makes my life a perpetual terror. **Thickens**—grows dim.

51. **Makes wing**—flies. **Rocky**—rook-haunted. The raven jackdaw and rook belong to the same genus as crow.

52. **Good things.....drowse**—*N. B.* This line reveals the inner soul of the tragedy—"the tragedy of dark twilight and the setting-in of thick darkness upon a human soul."—(*Dowden*). **Good .....day**—the good among living creatures. **Begin.....drowse**—feel tired and long for sleep.

53. **Whiles**—while. **Night's black agents**—those who engage in wicked deeds at night. 'Black' refers to both the wickedness of heart as a motive and to darkness of night as a convenience. The 'agents' will refer to evil spirits, robbers, murderers, wild beasts, etc. **To their.....rouse**—wake up to pursue their prey.

46-53. (*Explanation*). **Come, seeling night.....rouse**—Macbeth hints to his wife that "a deed of dreadful note" is going to be

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accomplished. He is not explicit. It shows that they are drifting apart. Crime seems to have raised a spiritual barrier between them. He can only throw out dark hints. He invokes night. Let night come and close up the eye of the day which has an abhorrence of crime, and will look on the victim of crime with pity. Let night be his accomplice in his crime, and so let night tear pieces the great bond) the tenure by which Banquo and Fleance hold their lives), which makes him live in perpetual suspence and terror. Light grows dim, and the crow seeks its nest. The good among living creatures now feel tired and need rest, but now is the time when the wicked are active—they are out to look for their victims. Night's black agents are evil spirits, murderers, etc. We may compare what Macbeth says in dagger scene :

"Now o'er the one half-world
Nature seems dead, and wicked dreams abuse
Curtain'd sleep : witchcraft celebrates
Pale Hecate's offerings, and *wither'd murder.*
Alarum'd by his sentinel, the wolf,
Whose howl's his watch, thus with his stealthy peace,
With Tarquin's ravishing strides, towards his design
Moves like a ghost." —II. i. 49-56.

54. **Thou marvell's**—Macbeth's dark hints elicit little enthusiastic response from his wife. She will soon find that she is denied not only co-operation in, but also knowledge of her husband's plans. **Hold thee still**—bear yourself in patience.

55. **Things.....ill**—I have begun with a crime, and I can secure my position only by committing further crimes. Compare—"Small mischiefs are by greater made secure,"—Webster : *White Devil.*

56. **Go with me**—the words may be either taken literally, or to mean—consent to my plans and do not press for confidences.

ACT III : SCENE III

Analysis. The two murderers are joined by a third one. He has been deputed by Macbeth. So the third murderer is welcomed by the other two as he seems to be well posted in all details and directions. The third murderer first catches the tramping of horses, and prepares to walk the distance to the palace. The murderers get ready. As Banquo and Fleance enter with a torch, the murderers fall upon Banquo at once. Banquo bids his son fly and keep himself alive to revenge his death. So Fleance escapes. In the meantime one of the murderers strikes out the light, and is taken to task by the third murderer. So they miss Fleance the "best half" of their affair.

Critical Note. A brief scene, but dramatically portentous, for Fleance escapes. It reveals that Macbeth's success can be but

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qualified success. So there can be no end to the "fitful fever" of Macbeth's life. The third murderer is supposed by some commentators to be Macbeth himself in disguise. Let it be noted that this scene marks the crisis in Macbeth's fortune.

Notes and Explanations

The scene follows past upon the last. There is considerable speculation as to who the third murderer is. Some hold that he is the 'perfect spy' of III. i . 130 ; others that Macbeth hired a third man to keep watch on the other two. Irving thinks that he is the "Attendant" of act III, Scene I, and Libby that he is Ross. It has been also argued with considerable genuity that the third murderer is Macbeth himself.

1. **But**—it seems to be a sequel to previous conservations. **Did**—emphatic. **Join with**—archaic for 'join'.

2. **He**—the third murderer. **Needs not our mistrust**—need not be treated with suspicion.

2-3. **Delivers Our offices**—instructs us, as to what we should do. **Delivers**—reports. **Offices**—proper functions.

4. **To the direction just**—exactly according to directions we received from Macbeth. "Macbeth's uneasiness made him reinforce the party with a cleverer hand"—*Moberly*. **To**—according to, **Just**—precisely. **Then stand with us**—both the literal sense and the sense of 'taking your chance with us.'

5. **The west.....day**—there are still some faint traces of light on the western horizon. **Glimmers**—shines faintly.

6. **Spurs**—urges on the horse by means of spurs. **Lated**—belated. **Apace**—fast.

7. **Gain.....inn**—reach in time an inn where he may get food and shelter for the night. **Timely**—(1) reachable betimes ; (2) convenient.

8. **To subject of our watch**—the person for whom we are keeping watch—Banquo. **Hark**—it is the third murderer who first catches the tramping of horses.

9. **Within**—from behind the stage. **Give.....ho**—Banquo and Fleance now get down from their horses. They walk for the palace across a lawn. Their horses are led away by their grooms to the stables by another route. Banquo asks one of the grooms for a light because it is so dark that he cannot see his way.

10. **That.....expectation**—whose names are on the list of expected guests : who are expected to attend the banquet. **Expectation**—expected guests. Abstract for concrete.

11. **Already.....court**—have already arrived at the palace. **Go about**—are led about by a circuitous route.

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12. **Almost a mile**—by the longer route it is almost a mile, and the horses are led along this route. **He**—Banquo.

13. **From hence**—from here.

14. **Make.....walk**—walk over. **Their—it** should be 'his', for the subject of 'make' is 'he'.

15. **A light**—the second murderer sees Fleance bring in a light. **'Tis he**—there can be no mistake about the guess being Banquo.

16. **Stand to't**—do not recoil from your task; stand where you are, and do what you are pledged to.

17. **It will be rain**—figurative sense; there will be shower of blows. **Let it come down**—let the blow descend like rain.

18. **Treachery**—Banquo warns Fleance that the murderous attack is a premeditated plot, and that it would be better for him to save his own life and seek revenge later than try to rescue him (Banquo).

19. **Thou.....revenge**—if you can save yourself, you can one day avenge your father's murder. **O slave**—addressed to one of the murderers.

20. **Who.....light**—the first murderer put out the torch. brought by Fleance. **Was't.....Way**—was it (extinguishing the light) not the right way to do the murder ?

21. **There's.....down**—only one has been killed.

21-22. **Lost.....affair**—failed to carry out the important part of our task.

23. **Away**—get away. **Say**—inform the king. **How much is done**—how much of the task has been carried out.

ACT III : Scene IV

Analysis. It is a room of state in the palace. The guests have assembled. Macbeth bids them sit down in order of their position, and welcomes them both on his behalf and on the Lady Macbeth's. Macbeth advances to the door, and meets the first murderer. He reports the murder of Banquo, for which he receives Macbeth's sincerest thanks. But his joy is marred when he hears that Fleance has escaped. It can mean his relapse into suspense and fear. At present he may have no fear of Fleance—but in future he may prove a great danger. The murderer is then dismissed.

Lady Macbeth reproaches her husband for his indifference to the guests. He turns to the guests and wishes them healthy appetite and good digestion. When Macbeth regrets the absence of Banquo, suddenly the ghost of Banquo appears, and sits in Macbeth's place. The ghost is not seen by the guests. When

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Macbeth is requested to sit in his place, he sees the ghost of Banquo sitting there, and addresses wild words to the ghost. Lady Macbeth at once covers up her husband's indiscretion. She explains it as a temporary fit, which will be aggravated if he is watched and observed. Lady Macbeth seeks to calm him by reproaching him for his nervous excitability and proneness to hallucination. Macbeth points out the ghost to his wife, but to Lady Macbeth the ghost remains invisible.

The ghost soon disappears. Lady Macbeth still reproaches him. Macbeth protests that he saw the ghost, and raves on about murders that have been committed since the world began, but no return of the dead from their graves to torment the living. Macbeth recovers himself sufficiently to attend to his guests, to whom he properly apologises for his "strange infirmity". He bids his guests drink health and invites them to honour the absent Banquo with a pledge. The mere mention of Banquo's name brings back the ghost again. Macbeth again addresses the ghost in a wild speech. The ghost is, however, unseen by guests. Lady Macbeth excuses her husband to them. The ghost vanishes again.

After all this, the feast cannot certainly go on. Lady Macbeth requests the guest to let her husband alone—and not to disturb him by any conversation. She bids them good-night, and the feast is broken off. All the guests soon take their leave, and depart. Macbeth is still very much excited. The ghost, he thinks, has come to demand blood. It sets all his nerves tingling with unknown terror. Macbeth now remembers that Macduff has not come to the feast. He has kept a spy in every house of lord. He will seek ths weird sisters tomorrow. He must know the worst that is in for him. He is now so far gone in bloody crimes that it is impossible for him to retrace his steps. He is meditating further desperate crimes to secure his position. Lady Macbeth begs him to go to bed. Macbeth realises that he is still a novice in crime, and that he needs only getting used to it, when he will no more be subject to a hallucination.

Critical Note. Macbeth has again miscalculated the thought that the murder of Banquo would give him permanent peace of mind. In a previous speech he cries. "O ! full of scorpions in my mind, dear wife." But have the scorpions been laid at rest by the murder of Banquo ? His unrest and torment becomes all the more acute now. The worst of it is the resuscitation of the dead ; the dead return to plague the living.

"But now they rise again
With twenty mortal murders on their crown,
And push us from our stools."

What is Macbeth's reaction to this supernatural terror (which may also be regarded as the objectification of the terror—the haunting dread of an outraged conscience) ? He believes that he can

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only fortify his mortal nature against this terror, supernatural or otherwise, by repetition of crimes. He has gone so far through blood that "returning were as tedious as go o'er." He has begun in crime, and he must end in crime. It is the philosophy of a desperate man.

The supernatural is managed with admirable skill. The ghost of Banquo is visible to none but Macbeth, and speaks no word. Macbeth shakes in fear, and with his nerves taut, his gestures wild, addresses the ghost, unseen to the guests, in a speech, however, blustering, that seems to betray him. Lady Macbeth saves the situation with her marvellous tact.

Notes and Explanations

1. **Your own degrees**—your order of prudence. At a formal dinner, seats are arranged according to the rank of the guests.

1-2. **At first and last**—from beginning to end ; once for all. **The hearty welcome**—I bid you hearty welcome.

3. **Ourself**—*i. e.*, **I. Society**—guests assembled here.

4. **Play.....host**—humbly attend to you as host.

5. **Hostess**—Lady Macbeth. **Keeps her state**—remains seated in the chair of state. The chair, which is on a dais and has a canopy over it, is placed at the upper end of the hall. **In best time**—at the most appropriate moment.

6. **Require her welcome**—request her to come to the table and welcome her guests personally.

7. **Pronounce it for me**—give the welcome on my behalf.

8. **For my heart speaks**—when my lips do not, my heart speaks welcome to them. She means that her welcome, uttered by her husband, comes straightway from her heart.

9. **Encounter thee**—repay your welcome. **With.....thanks**—with their most cordial thanks.

10. **Both sides are even**—(1) both sides of the table are evenly balanced ; (2) the welcome of the host and hostess is equalled by the thanks of the guests. **Here**—indicating a chair, **i' the midst**—(1) at the head of the table between two equally long rows of guests ; (2) among my guests.

11. **Be large in mirth**—enjoy yourselves freely ; be free-hearted in your mirth. **Measure**—a toast in honour of the guests.

12. **The table round**—right round the table. The toast is drunk in succession by each guests, and thus passes from one end of the table to the other.

14. **'Tis better.....within**—(1) it (the blood) is better *without thee i.e.*, on your face) than *he within* (*i.e.*, in Banquo's veins) ; (2) it is better for you to be without (*i.e.*, outside) than for

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him (Banquo) within the banquet hall. Macbeth would rather meet the murderer at the door of his dining-hall than have Banquo sitting as a guest at his table. This first explanation is preferable.

15. **Is he dispatch'd**—has he been done away with ? A euphemism.

16. **That I did for him**—it was I who cut his throat.

17. **Cut throats**—murderers. Contempt is mingled with praise.

18. **That.....Fleance**—who cut the throat of Fleance. **If thou didst it**—if you had done the same to Fleance.

19. **Nonpareil**—peerless among murderers.

20. **'Scaped**—escaped.

21. **My fit**—the agony of suspense and terror. **Had**—would have been. **Else**—otherwise ; if Fleance had not escaped. **Perfect**—content or sound.

22. **Whole**—solid ; sound. **Founded**—firm-based.

23. **Broad**—free-moving. **General**—all-pervasive. **Casing air** air that surrounds the earth. **Casing**—encasing : enveloping.

24. **Now**—in view of Fleance's escape. **Cabin'd**—confined as in a cabin (small hut) ; cramped within narrow limits. **Cribb'd**—shut up as in a *crib* (a child's bed) ; cooped up in a small space. **Confin'd**—closely restrained. **Bound in**—chained and caged (like a wild beast) : or shackled and placed in a cell (like a prisoner).

25. **To**—to be the victim of **Saucy**—overbearing. **Doubts**—regarding. Banquo's issue succeeding to the throne. **Fear**—on account of Fleance exposing his crime.

21-25. (*Explanation*). **Then comes my fit.....fears**—Macbeth meets the murderer at the door of the banquet-hall. He is glad to hear that Banquo has been murdered. But when he is told that Fleance has escaped, he is dejected. So there can be no peace of mind for him ; there can be no end to his suspense and fear—they would rather be doubly renewed. If Fleance had been murdered with his father, his happiness would have been complete, and his throne secure—he could have breathed again freely. But now that Fleance is alive and free to plot against him, he lives a close prisoner to doubts and fears, which will haunt and oppress him day and night. There is no getting away from such doubts and fears.

N. B. Macbeth's position becomes desperate with every crime committed. And such is his illusion that he believes he can secure his throne and fortify his mortal nature against fears by repeated crimes. He believes he will be able to wade through blood to a safe throne and a peaceful mind.

25. **But Banquo's safe**—but Banquo is dead and can give me of more trouble.

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N. B. While it is an instance of euphemism, there is unconscious irony, tragic and poignant, in the word "safe," for Banquo too, "after life's fitful fever," will sleep well, but for Macbeth there is no "safety," haunted perpetually as he is, by suspense and fear. It is but a poor comfort to Macbeth that Banquo is no more.

26. **Safe**—*i. e.*, without any chance of revival. The murderer too miscalculates ; Banquo will rise from the dead. **Bides**—stays lifeless and motionless.

27. **Trenched gashes**—wounds as deep as ditches ; deep-cut wounds.

28. **The least———nature**—the least of these wounds being mortal to life. **Nature**—life.

29. **There**—in the ditch. **The grown serpent**—*i. e.*, Banquo. **Worm**—the young snake (*i. e.*, Fleance). **There the grown serpent——fled**—*N. B.* It is but a variation of Macbeth's old metaphor : "We have *scotch'd* the snake not kill'd !"

30. **Hath nature——breed**—inherits a character that will, with growing years, render him dangerous. **Venom**—poison. **Breed**—produce.

31. **No teeth for the present**—at present he is quite harmless. **Teeth**—the serpent's fangs which contain poison. **Get thee gone**—Macbeth dismisses the murderer.

32. **We'll hear ourselves again**—(1) "we will hear ourselves talk again"—(*Deighton*) ; *i. e.*, I will hear what you have to say and you shall hear what I have to say. (2) I shall have more to say on this matter ; (3) we shall talk to each other again.

33. **Give the cheer**—extend a hospitable welcome to the guests. **Cheer**—kindly welome.

33.35. **The feast is sold——welcome**—that feast is sold which, while it is being held, is not repeatedly demonstrated to the guests that it is an act of grateful hospitality. **Is sold**—you are not treating your guests as they should have been treated when they were invited. They are being treated as if they were customers at a hotel where they would have to pay for their meals. **Vouch'd**—warranted. **A-making**—being given. "That feast can only be considered as sold, not given, during which the entertainers omit such courtesies as may assure their guests that it is given with welcome"—*Dyce.*

35. **To feed——home**—if satisfaction of hunger is the object in view, it can be done best at home.

36. **From thence**—when dining out. **The sauce to meat**—what makes food most palatable. **Ceremony**—formal courtesy.

37. **Meeting**—dining in company. **Were**—would be. **Bare**—

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meaningless. **Without it**—without ceremony. **Remembran cer**—the person who reminds.

38. **Good digestion.....appetite**—may you have an appetite good enough to do justice to all the dishes and may what you eat be well digested !

39. **Health on both**—may health result from your good appetite and good digestion !

STAGE DIRECTION. **The Ghost of.....place**—Opinion is divided on the question whether Banquo's ghost should be visible to the audience or whether they are to infer from Macbeth's words and gestures that he sees it. According to stage directions, both in Shakespeare's time and subsequently, the ghost is seen by all ; but the text of the play clearly supposes that only Macbeth sees it.

40. **Here**—in this hall. **Had we**—we would have. **Our country's honour**—all our distinguished countrymen. **Roof'd**—gathered under our roof.

41. **Were the graced person.....present**—if the gracious Banquo were also present.

42. **Who**—whom. **Challenge**—tax.

43. **Mischance**—accident.

42-43. **Who may I rather.....mischance**—let me hope that when I meet Banquo, I may charge him with unkindness in having neglected to come to dinner than be sorry for some accident that might have prevented him from coming.

44. **Lays.....promise**—indicates the promise he made that he would come to dinner.

45. **Grace—.....company**—favour us by sitting at table with us.

46. **The table 's full**—because the ghost is occupying Macbeth's chair. But as yet he does not see the ghost. All that he perceives is that no seat is vacant.

47. **Where**—Macbeth does not see any seat vacant.

48. **Moves**—agitates. **What's.....highness**—Lennox first perceives the perturbed expression on Macbeth's face—the wild, distracted look.

49. **Which.....done this**—at first Macbeth thinks that somebody has played a trick. Note that the ghost has no objective existence to the guests, but to Macbeth alone. At first Macbeth could not believe that Banquo's ghost should have paid him a visit. So it must be a trick of his guests. Of course his guests cannot understand what Macbeth refers, to, for they do not see the ghost. **What**—done what ?

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50. **Thou canst.....it**—*N.B.* Macbeth has lost his nerve. He seems to be forgetful of the presence of the guests, but addresses the ghost who is unseen by the guests. According to Backnell, the ghost is a hallucination, not an apparition—a creation of Macbeth's heated fancy. If the ghost is nothing but an objectification of his terrorised conscience, it may be shown how his morbidity develops. The 'horrible imaginings' of Act I, Scene III mark the stage when he does not *see* what he *imagines*. The "fatal vision" of the dagger (Act II, Scene I) marks the stage when he *sees* what he *imagines* but does not *believe* in it. The ghost of Banquo marks the third stage when he not only *sees* but also *believe* to what he *imagines*. **Did it**—murdered. Macbeth seeks refuge in a craven-hearted lie. But Banquo, even at the moment of being murdered, knew and proclaimed that it was Macbeth who was responsible for it. After all it was impossibe to conceal the truth from a spirit. In his distraction he forgets that murder will be out --a truth which he recognises later :

"Stones have been known to move, and trees to speak ;
Augures and understood relations have
By maggot-pies and choughs and rooks brought forth
The secret'st mon of blood." —(III. iv 124-27)

50-51. **Never shake.....me**—a grim touch. The ghost is not made to speak, but shakes his bloods-stained locks at Macbeth. **Gory**— steeped in blood. **Locks**—hair. 'Locks' is put by Synecdoche for 'head'.

52. **Gentleman rise.....well**—*N. B.* Ross has been shown to be loyal to Macbeth. Is there any secret understanding between Macbeth and Ross ? Even before Lady Macbeth, Ross suggests that they should break up the party. If Ross is not privy to Banquo's murder, he may suspect it from Macbeth raving speech to the unseen ghost. Ross is anxious not to let Macbeth's guests suspect the crime. Ross has a greater presence of mind than Lady Macbeth. It takes Lady Macbeth sometimes to grasp the situation —the imminent risk of self-betrayal.

53. **Is often thus**—is often subject to such fits.

54. **Hath.....youth**—has been afflicted with this distemper since his youth. A hint that Macbeth is pretty advanced in years.

55. **Is momentry**—will soon pass away. **Upon a thought**—in a moment ; as quich as thought.

56. **If much.....him**—if you pay marked attention to his action or speeches.

57. **Offend**—irritate. **Extend**—prolong the period of. **Passion**—suffering.

58. **Regard him not**—take no notice of him. **Are you a man**

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—this is private admonition to Macbeth. Lady Macbeth draws her husband aside, and speaks to him.

60. **Appal**—frighten.

59-69. **Thath dare.....devil**—Macbeth means that the sight he has seen will frighten the devil himself. He evidently points to the chair which is empty, so far as Lady Macbeth perceives it. **Proper stuff**—silly nonsense. **Proper**—excellent, (ironical).

61. **This is.....fear**—the dreadful picture that you see is painted by your fear ; it is a vision, called up by your imagination.

62. **Air-drawn**—floating in the air.

63. **Flaws**—outbursts of passion. **Starts**—sudden impulsive fits.

64. **Impostors**—fasle pretenders. **To**—compared to. **Impostors to true fear**—they are mere false appearances of terror—"horrible imaginings" as compared to true fear. **Well become**—quite appropriate to.

65. **A woman's story**—a story told by a crony. **At a winter's fire**—when seated in a group by the fireside on a winter evening.

66. **Authoriz'd**—vouched for. **Grandam**—grandmother.

63-66. (*Explanation*). **O' these flaws and starts.....grandam**—Lady Macbeth admonishes her husband privately for giving way to "horrible imaginings", for bragging at a shadow or phantom. Macbeth supposed that he had seen the ghost of Banquo, and was quite beside himself, and began to rave. He might have betrayed himself. Lady Macbeth takes him aside and lectures him on his false and absurd apprehensions. These sudden outbursts of passion and distracted looks and gestures can be nothing but the result of hallucinations. There is no basis for such fears. They are unworthy of a man, though they may be appropriate to a crony, who seated by the fireside on a winter evening tells a hair-raising story which she has heard from her grandmother.

66 **Shame itself**—"Your behaviour is the very impersonation of shame."—(*Deighton.*)

67. **Faces**—grimaces. **Why do.....faces**—Macbeth's face is twitching and twisting in his efforts at self-control. **When all's done**—after all.

68. **You.....stool**—you look on an empty chair, and see something else.

69. **See there**—Macbeth points to the chair in which he still sees ghost of Banquo seated. **How say you**—what have you got to say now? Macbeth now thinks that his wife sees the ghost as well as himself.

70. **Why, what care !**—Macbeth gives expression to his

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desperate mood. **If thou canst nod, speak too**—Macbeth dares the ghost to speak, when he can only keep nodding—a gesture of accusation or mockery. Macbeth said previously that the ghost shook his "gory locks" at him. The ghost must have been continuing the same gesture.

71. **Charnel-houses**—vaults where dead bodies are deposited. **Must send**—must let loose.

72. **Back**—should be taken with 'send' in the above line.

72-73. **Our monuments.....kites**—(7) we should rather give up the practice of burying the dead and expose the corpses to be devoured by birds of prey. Perhaps there is the idea that the bodies of the dead should not be allowed to remain intact with the possibility of ghosts wearing the features of the dead. (2) A French critic interprets, "our present tombs must be like the stomachs of those unclean birds that are wont to disgorge their prey." **Monuments**—graves. **Maws**—stomachs.

74. **Quite**—wholly. **Unmann'd**—cowed down by fears. **Folly** your foolish fancies.

75. **If I stand.....him**—sure, as I stand here, I saw him (the ghost of Banquo).

76. **Blood hath been shed**—murders have been committed. **I' the olden time**—*N. B.* Macbeth might be thinking of the murder of Abel—the earliest murder, recorded in the Old Testament.

77. **Human statue**—(1) law devised by man : (2) law making the growth of kindly feelings in society. **Purged**—purified. **Weal**—commonwealth ; society.

78. **Since too**—even after such laws had been passed.

79. **Too terrible for the ear**—the details of which are shocking to be described. **The time has been**—there was a time when.

80. **When the brains were out**—when a man had his brains dashed out. **The man would die**—there was an end of man, and he could give no more trouble, as living he would have done.

81. **And there an end**—the man will be finally disposed of there will be no resuscitation of the dead.

82. **Mortal murders**—deadly wounds. **Crowns**—heads. Some critics advanced the theory that the ghost here was the ghost of Duncan. Now the ghost, raised by Macbeth's hallucination, conforms to the description of Banquo by the murderers.

83. **Push.....stools**—deprive us of our seats. Unconsciously Macbeth might be thinking of the peril of his dethronement, when the dead rise again from their graves to denounce his crimes.

84. **Such a murder**—a murder committed by inflicting twenty deadly wounds.

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76-84 (*Exaplanation*). **Blood hath been shed.....murder is**—it seems strange to Macbeth that the dead should rise again from their graves. Murders had been committed since the world began until they were checked by law. Even after the passing of the laws, murders have been committed, the details of which are too shocking to be described. But till now Macbeth has not heard of an instance in which the dead (or the murdered man) returned to plague the living. When a man had his brains dashed out, he was dead and there was an end of him. But now things have changed. A man (as Banquo was) might be killed with twenty gashes on his head yet he would rise from the grave, and push a living man from his chair. It passes belief. It is certainly more strange than the foulest murder itself.

85. **Do lack you**—miss your presence in their midst.

N. B. "At first she (Lady Macbeth) rallies him angrily, and seeks to shame him into self-command ; a moment shows that he is too far gone to be reached by such motives. Instantly she changes her tactics and.....endeavours to recall him to his senses by assuming an ordinary tone of voice.....the device proves successful, his nerves respond to tone of everyday life, and recovering himself he uses all his skill of department to efface the strangeness of the episode, until the reappearance to the viction plunges the scene in confusion past recovery."—*Moulton.*

86. **Muse**—wonder ; marvel.

87. **Infirmity**—disease. **Is nothing**—is not minded by.

88. **Love and health to all**—I wish love and health to all.

89. **Fill full**—fill the wine cup to the brim. "Macbeth's shaken nerves cry for wine."—*Grierson.*

90. **I drink.....table**—I drink to the happiness of all the guests at this table. **Drink to the joy o'**—drink wishing happiness to. **General**—collective. **Table**—persons seated at the table. (Figure) *Metonymy.*

91. **To our dear friend Banquo**—to put a brave face on the matter, Macbeth again mentions Banquo. This is a false step, and it brings the ghost on again.

92. **Would.....here**—as soon as Macbeth wishes for the presence of Banquo, Banquo's ghost answers the occult summons. **We thirst**—I drink this health. We—the plural of majesty.

93. **All to all**—I wish all good wishes to all. **Our duties**—we offer you our homage. **Pledge**—"and pledge you in the toast you have given."—*Deighton.*

STAGE DIRECTION. **Re-enter Ghost**—The theory that there are two ghosts, one of Banquo and the other of Duncan, is untenable. The ghost that appears first, cannot be that of Duncan, because it appears in answer to Macbeth's wish.

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91. **Avaunt**—begone. **Quit my sight**—get out of my presence. **Let.....thee**—let the grave confine you.

95. **Marrowless**—without the fatty substance, contained within the cavities of bones. **Thy blood is cold**—not the circulating warm blood in the veins of living man.

96. **Speculation**—(1) power of vision ; (2) light of intelligence.

97. **Which.....with**—with which you give me a fierce frown. **Glare**—a word that fully conveys the horror of the spectre. **Peers**—brother nobles.

98. **But as**—as no worse than. **A thing of custom**—a usual thing with him.

99. **Only**—my only regret is that. **Spoils.....time**—breaks up our present happy gathering.

100. **What man dare, I dare**—Macbeth repeats the thought of I. vii. 46. In any case Macbeth's physical courage remains beyond question. His physical courage can little meet the spiritual terrors which oppress him.

101. **Like**—taking the shape of. **Rugged**—shaggy. **Russian bear**—bears abound in Russia, and the country is often referred to as the Bear (or the Great Bear).

102. **Arm'd**—"cased in the armour of an impenetrable hide." —*Clarks and Wright*. **Hyrcan**—short for Hyrcanian. Hyrcania is the classical name for a province of ancient Persia on the south and south-east of the Caspian Sea. Both Pliny and Virgil speak of it as breeding-place of tigers.

103. **But that**—except that of Banquo. Here Macbeth points to the ghost, but the ghost is invisible to others. **Firm**—proleptic use (*i. e.*, remaining firm even after seeing you).

105. **Be alive again**—*N. B.* Rather than be confronted with the grinning ghost of Banquo and have his nerves shaken by wild terror, perhaps Macbeth wishes (against himself) that Banquo had been alive. To his crime-seared conscience these spiritual terrors are most baffling and distracting.

105. **Dare me to the desert**—challenge me to follow you to a lonley place, where we can fight a duel to the finish.

106. **Inhabit**—(1) stay at house ; (2) am clothed with fear. 'Trembling' may be taken as a verbal noun, then if I inhabit (put on the habit or dress of) trembling or fear. 'Inhabit' has also been taken as a copyist's mistake for, a variant spelling of 'inhabit,' then 'forbid you to approach.' **Protest me**—declare me to be ; denounce us as.

107. **The baby of a girl**—(1) the child of an immature and unmarried girl. Such a bastard would not be born strong or

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brought up in care : further, it would not inherit courage or nobility; (2) the doll of a little girl, a mere puppet unworthy to be king. 'Baby' has the sense of a 'doll.' Compare : "Sweet babes must *babies* have"—*Sidney* ; (3) the typically babyish girl (a girl who continues to be a baby). Compare—a brute of a man. **Hence**—go away. **Horrible shadow**—fearful ghostly shape.

108. **Unreal**—unsubstantial. **Mockery**—counterfeit representation.

100-08. (*Explanation*). **What man dare.....hence**—Macbeth addresses the ghost of Banquo unseen by others. He cannot stand the likeness of the murdered Banquo, for his conscience is so heavily charged with the crime. He is not wanting in physical courage, and he is prepared to meet the ghost in any other shape than that of the murdered Banquo. Let the ghost assume the shape of the shaggy Russian bear or the rhinoceros with its impenetrable hide or the tiger from the Hyrcanian desert, and he will be able to face it without flinching, or any shock to his nerves. Or rather he wishes that Banquo were alive again, and challenged him (Macbeth) to meet him in deadly encounter in some desert place, and if then he (Macbeth) held back in fear, let him be declared a mere puppet, not a man but a babyish girl. He charges to shadow to depart and oppress him no more with terror that he cannot fight.

108. **Why, so**—there, now. **Being gone**—the ghost having disappeared.

109 **I am a man again**—I resume my normal courage and fortitude. **Sit still**—addressed to the guests.

110. **Displaced**—banished. **Mirth**—festivity. **Broke**—broken; interrupted. **Good meeting**—festive gathering.

111. **Admired**—*i. e.*, astonishing. **Disorder**—confusion. **Such things**—as the ghost that I saw.

112. **Overcome**—take by surprise. **Summer's cloud**—a thunder-storm in summer.

113. **Without**—without rousing. **Wonder**—atonishment.

113-14. **You make me strange.....owe**—your apathy (to the presence of a supernatural being) makes me doubt whether I am really as brave as I consider myself to be. **Make me strange**—make me feel a stranger. **Disposition**—natural temperament. Some explain it as 'temporary mood,' 'present state of mind,' **Owe**—own ; possess.

116. **Keep the natural ruby.....cheeks**—keep your countenance blenched. **Ruby**—rosy bloom.

117. **Is blanch'd**—is robbed of all colour. **What sights, my brd**—fortunately for Macbeth, his guests did not see the ghost.

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They cannot make anything of Macbeth's speech. Note that however Macbeth is shaken by terrors, he never once mentions. Banquo by name in taking about the ghost. His terror cannot overcome his cautiou. In fact he never forgets himself. The guests, therefore, have to be satisfied with Lady Macbeth's explanation of a temporary fit, though suspicion may breed in some minds.

118. **Speak not**—do not disturb him by asking him anything. **He grows.....worse**—the fit is getting on him.

119. **Question**—(1) being questioned ; (2) conversation. **Enrages**—annoys. **At once, good night**—without any ado, Lady Macbeth dismisses the company.

120. **Stand not.....going**—you need not observe court etiquette and retire according to the order of your precedence. **Stand not upon**—do not insist on.

122. **Kind**—loving.

123. **It will have blood**—*i. e.*, his crime must be expiated in blood. **They say**—compare ; "And no expiation can be made for the blood that is shed but by the blood of him that shed it."—*Numbers*, XXXV. 33. **Blood will have blood**—the blood of the murdered man cries for the blood of the murderer (the popular belief being that the ghost of the murdered cannot rest in the grave until his murder has been avenged and so the ghost of Hamlet's father in Shakespeare's play '*Hamlet*' walks the earth until he meets Hamlet and lays upon him the task of avenging his murder).

N. B. The conviction that his crime of murder would recoil upon him is growing upon Macbeth. His consciousness of evil is not totally dulled and deadened by his crime. He is now growing desperate, but there is "a soul of good" in his desperation, for he is conscious of evil as evil, nay, he even shrinks from, and dreads, it. But later comes a stage of indifference when he does not think of the future, is reckless about the present ; and hardly seems to be *human*. He is led on from crime to crime under the delusion that by this means only he can secure his throne, and eat and sleep in peace.

124. **Stones.....speak**—murderers have been exposed by such things as stones and trees. Compare ; "Commit a crime and the earth is made of glass. Commit a crime and it seems as if a coat of snow fell on the ground, such as reveals in the woods the track of every partridge and fox and squirrel and mole. You cannot recall the spoken word, you cannot wipe out the fast track you cannot draw up the ladder, so as to leave no inlet or clew. Always some damning circumstances transpires. *The laws and substances of nature, water, snow, wind, gravitation become penalties to the thief.*" —*Emerson*. **Stones**—(1) This is taken to refer to the *clack breath*, of "rocking-stones," by which the Druids tested blood-guilt. An inno-

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cent person could easily move them, but not murderer could do so. One such stone was near Clamis Castle. (?) Clark and Wright suppose it to be some story of stones having moved of themselves and thus disclosed to view the bones of a murdered man placed beneath them. **Trees**—(1) Virgil's *Aeneid* tells the story of Polydorus, a Trojan prince, who was murdered ; over his grave grew the boughs from which dropped blood and thus revealed the murder. (2) Or the reference may be to the oracle of Zeus and Dione at Dodona (in Equirus), where the will of the god was declared through the rustling of the leaves of the sacred oak trees. It is mentioned in Scott's *Discoveries of Witchcraft*. **Speak**—reveal a murder.

125. **Augurs**—augures ; divinations. **Augurs.....relations**—the ability to grasp, by means of divination, the mystic connection between omens and what they portend. **Understood relations**—the understanding of relation. A Latinism.

126. **By**—by watching the signs given by. The reference is to the Roman practice of divination by observing the flight of birds. **Maggot-pies**—magpies. The chattering of magpies was considered an evil omen. **Choughs**—birds of the crow family ; the term was especially applied to jackdaws. The crowing of a crow was also considered an evil omen. **Brought forth**—laid bare ; discovered.

127. **The Secret'st man of blood**—the murderer who had covered his tracks most successfully.

123-27. (*Explanation*). **It will have blood.....man of blood**—Macbeth seems to be convinced that his crimes of murder will recoil on himself. Murder will be out. Even such inanimate things as stones and trees will sometimes reveal a murder. Then murder has been traced by the art of divination. For example, through the agency of magpies, choughs, rooks the most cautious and circumspect murderer has been unearthed. Fear of retribution oppresses Macbeth's mind. The conviction is growing on him that he cannot get away from punishment. The apparition of Banquo so soon after his murder is a warning and proof to him.

127. **What.....night**—how far is night advanced.

128. **At odds with morning**—it is difficult to say whether it is still night or morning. **At odd**—at variance.

129. **How say'st thou**—what do you think of ? **Denies his person**—refuses to come.

130. **At.....bidding**—even when invited by me as king. **Great**—applies to the 'bidder' (inviter), and not to bidding. A transferred epithet.

129-130. **How say's thou.....bidding**—*N. B.* It has been pointed out above that in spite of his distraction with terror, he does not forget his caution. Macbeth's weakness is his imagination

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—almost the imagination of a poet. His imagination readily catches fire, and puts shapes of terror before him—and sometimes makes him, in colour moments, scan his action. He is not so self-introspective as Hamlet, in whom *speculative reason* seems to predominate, as imagination in Macbeth ; therefore Macbeth is a man of action as Hamlet is a man of contemplation. His restless energy, goaded on by, and also seeking to escape from, his haunting sense of guilt, exhausts itself in crime after crime. Now, immediately, after he recovers from his "horrible imaginings," he remembers that Macduff has not responded to his invitation. It can mean only that Macduff will be his enemy. Crime engenders suspicion and suspicion engenders crime. **Send to him**—send a messenger to him. She is completely exhausted, and answers Macbeth in listless submissive words."—*Bradley.*

131. **By the way**—incidentally from others. **Send**—send a messenger to know what the matter is.

132-33. **But in his .....keep**—in whose house I do not keep. **A servant fee'd**—a servant who is a spy in my pay.

134. **Betimes**—early.

135. **Shall they speak**—It is necessary that they should speak. **Bent**—resolved.

136. **By the worst means, the worst**—Macbeth is "driven to that pitch of desperation in which suspense is torture and knowledge of the worst a relief." **Worst means**—having recourse to the witches. **The worst**—the worst in star for me. **For mine own good**—in order that I might prosper.

137. **All causes.....way**—(1) I will abandon every scruple (*i. e.*, behave mercilessly) : (2) I shall see that every obstacle is removed. The reference is to his decision to murder Macduff.

137-38. **I am.....so far**—I have proceeded so far in a bloodly career. **Should.....more**—if I were to stop now.

139. **Returning**—retracing my steps. **Were**—would be. **Tedious**—painful. **Go o'er**—the idea of wading through the river of blood. He is entangled in crime and cannot set himself free from it.

140. **Strange things.....head**—strange schemes are being hatched in my brain. **That will to hand**—which will be executed—"proceed from conception to action." Note that Macbeth and his wife are no longer partners in planning crimes.

141. **Acted**—translated into action. **May be scann'd**—(1) would fit to be scrutinized *i. e.*, I shall carry out my plans first and then judge whether I have done well or not ; or (2) can be known to other (*i.e.*, shall keep my plans secret ; people shall know of them only after they are executed.)

142. **Lack**—require. **Season**—seasoning : that which keeps fresh : preservative, **All natures**—all bodily constitutions.

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143. **My strange and self-abuse**—my strange self-elusions ; the abnormal mental condition which makes me see phantoms. **Self-abuse**—self-deception.

144. **Initiate fear**—fear which attends a novice. An initiate is a person who has been admitted into a sect, but is not yet familiar with its secret. **Hard**—hardening. **Use**—practice. **Hard use**—practice that will render one callous. The idea is that Macbeth is, as he believes, still a novice in crime : so a little more practice will harden his nature and then he will no more be subject to these hallucinations. A few more crimes, committed by him, will enable him to shake off such fears easily.

145. **Young in deed**—*i. e.*, beginners in crime.

ACT III : SCENE V

Analysis. The scene presents the three witches and Hecate. **Hecate is annoyed with the witches because they did not take her into confidence in their dealings with Macbeth. She is the mistress of their charms, the close contriver of all harms ; yet she was kept out from any share in the glory of their art. Nor is she pleased because they have shown their favour to a wayward son, spiteful and wrathful, who is self-seeking. She bids them leave her and meet her again at the pit of Archeron in the morning. She foretells that there Macbeth will come to know his destiny. Let the witches prepare their spells and enchantments. Hecate is going to spend the night in accomplishing a fatal purpose. She must gather a vaporous drop from the corner of the moon, and distil it by magic art, so that she may raise such spirits as will draw Macbeth on to his doom. The result will be that Macbeth will grow desperate, and defy fate and death, and will be elated by hopes above all prudence. Hecate takes a hasty leave of the witches.**

Critical Note. It is shown that the supernatural operation has not been suspended. Though Macbeth does not meet the witches till now, their influence has been acting on him. By seeking their aid again, Macbeth is compromising his own fate. The witches as it has been pointed out above, are the agents of the devil and Macbeth is led to believe that he can secure his throne only by allying himself more with the power of evil. So now grown desperate, he seeks the witches again.

It should be noted that the scene does not advance the action of the play. It has been supposed by some commentators to be an interpolation. The reasons given are : (1) the conception of the witches is different—the atmosphere lacks the subtle of gloom and mystery ; (2) Hence is unShakespearean and unnecessary ; (3) the metre is iambic, whereas in the Witch-scenes, Shakespeare uses trochees ; (4) some lines are unintelligible, specially the reference to the wayward son ; (5) the scene is with some portions of Middleton's *Witch*; (6) the song referred to is found in full in Middleton's

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Witch : (7) stage-managers in Shakespeare's day loved to interpolate such scenes, as they appealed to the groundlings.

Notes and Explanations

1. **Hecate**—the presiding deity of witchcraft. **Angerly**—angrily.

2. **Reason**—*i. e.*, to be angry. **Beldams**—loathsome hags.

5. **Saucy**—insolent. **Overbold**—presumptuous.

4. **Trade and traffic with**—have dealing with. The words do not suggest that there was something like a business contract between Macbeth and the Witches.

5. **Riddles**—ambiguous sayings. **Affairs of death**—matters involving the death of certain persons. Hecate charges the witches, not with having presumed, without her concurrence, to lead Macbeth into temptation, but with having simply taking part in his wicked intention.

6. **Mistress of your charms**—one from whom you derive your power of enchantment.

7. **Close**—secret. **Contriver**—designer. **Harms**—diffierent kinds of injuries done to people by means of witchcraft.

8. **Call'd**—invited. **Bear my part**—have my share in your dealings with Macbeth.

9. **Show.....art**—manifest what high achievements witchcraft is capable of.

11. **Wayward son**—the perverse Macbeth, who is not personally interested in witchcraft, but merely seeks his selfish ends by means of it. **Wayward**—"because he may yet escape from their toils unless they continue practising their arts upon him."—(*Scrimgeour*). **Son**—it is not clear why Hecate should call Macbeth 'son.' It is taken to refer either (1) to Sebastian, a young man in Middleton's *Witch*, of whom Hecate says. "I know he loves me not, nor there is no hope on't" and who after obtaining the charm from her departs with the prayer that "he may never need this hag again," or more likely (2) to Firestone, the son of Hecate in the same play, whom she rubukes for being unkind. This seems to suggest interpolation.

12. **Spiteful**—malicious.

13. **Loves.....ends**—wants to utilise you in his own selfish aims, and otherwise has nothing to do with you. **Loves**—courts your aid. **Not for you**—not for any attachment to you.

14. **Make amends**—repair the wrongs you have done. You did not wrong in coming to the aid of Macbeth without my permission. You must now show that you regret your conduct by helping me whole-heartedly in my plan of leading Macbeth to his ruin.

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15. **Pit of acheron**—evidently some mountain-pool as dark and gloomy as the nether world. **Pit**—well ; fountain. **Acheron**—one of the rivers of the lower regions. The pit of Acheron is supposed to communicate with hell, and, therefore, a fit place for Macbeth to meet the witches in.

17. **To know his destiny**—to know what is in store for him.

18. **Vessels**—cauldrons. **Spells**—magic incantations. **Provide**—arrange for.

20. **I am for the air**—Hecate is leaving the witches, and will fly through the air.

19. **A dismal.....end**—some dreadful calamity. **Dismal**—sinister. **Fatal**—(1) causing death ; (2) demanded by destiny.

22. **Great business**—important work. **Wrought**—done.

23. **Corner**—(1) lower end ; (2) horn. Hecate, as she is sometimes called Diana, was also the goddess of the moon.

24. **Vaporous drop**—drop of foam. The reference seems to be to the classical *virus lunare* (moon poison), the foam which the moon was supposed to shed on particular herbs, when strongly solicited by enchantment." **Profound**—(1) so thickly formed that it will soon fall ; (2) of deep significance ; (3) possessing great magical virtues.

26. **Distilled**—reduced to its quintessence. **Sleights**—arts.

27. **Raise**—summon. **Artificial**—produced by art ; made visible by magic. **Sprites**—spirits ; apparitions.

28. **Strength of their illusion**—strong misleading influence.

29. **Drew him on**—lure him. **Confusion**—destruction.

30. **Spurn**—defy.

30-31. **Bear.....fear**—entecertain his hopes beyond the point of wisdom, a sense of propriety and the fear of consequences.

32. **Security**—false sense of safety : confidence.

28-33. (*Explanation*). **As, by the strength of their illusion..... enemy**—Till now the witches have had dealings with Macbeth, independently of Hecate. Hecate knows that Macbeth has personally nothing to do with the witches, but wants to make use of their services for his own selfish ends. What she proposes to do is to lure Macbeth on to his doom. She is going to collect from the corner of the moon foam, and extract from it its very essence by magic art ; by means of this spell she will summon spirits, and these spirits will practise such deception upon Macbeth as to entice him to his destruction. So Macbeth will defy fate, be scornful of death and will entertain hopes that can never be supported by wisdom, sense of proportion and caution. In fact what Hecate intends to do is to breed in Macbeth over-confidence—a false sense of security. Nothing is a greater enemy to man than this false sense of security.

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STAGE DIRECTION. **A song within**—the song is found in Middleton's *Witch.*

"*Voice*—Come away, come away,
Hecate, Hecate, come away !
Hecate—I come, I come, I come, I come,
With all the speed I may,
With all the speed I may." etc.

34. **Little spirit**—familiar.

35 **'Foggy cloud**—a mass of cloud enveloped in a fog. **Stays for**—awaits.

ACT III : SCENE VI

Analysis. Lennox meets another lord. Lennox has been lately scanning. Macbeth's doings. He suspects that both Duncan and Banquo had been murdered by Macbeth, or at the instance of Macbeth. The pretext is too obvious. The gracious Duncan was pitied by Macbeth and he was dead. Banquo walked too late and he was killed. Just as it has been given out that Malcolm and Donalbain killed their gracious father, so it is whispered that Fleance killed Banquo. Macbeth satisfied his rage by killing at once the two grooms. Lennox thinks that Macbeth has managed things very cleverly. If he could get hold of Duncan's sons and of Fleance, they would have learned what it was to kill a father. He has also come to learn that Macduff lives in disgrace.

The lord tells Lennox that the son of Duncan (Malcolm) lives in the English court, where he has been well received by the pious Edward, and that Macduff has gone to England to seek the aid of Northumberland and Siward, with the permission of Edward, for the restoration of Duncan's heir to the throne of Scotland, and of peace and order in this distracted kingdom. He further tells Lennox that Macduff is making warlike preparations. In fact Macduff has openly defied Macbeth. He turned back as Macbeth's messenger. Both Lennox and the lord wish success to Macduff's mission and pray for the speedy deliverance of the country from the yoke of tyranny.

Critical Note. If this scene does not advance the action of the play, it is something like a comment on what is going on. Macbeth's haunting fear, and sense of insecurity, driving him on to desperation, have been fully shown to us. It is but the picture of the inner conflict in Macbeth. It remain to be shown in this scene how Macbeth's accession to the throne has been received by the people. Lennox seems to voice the popular sentiment. There have been whispers of suspicion about Macbeth, which seemed to have become more insistent, when the murder of Banquo follows that of Duncan. The scene also points to the counteraction that will bring about Macbeth's downfall.

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"The suspicion aroused by Duncan's murder has been filled in all minds but Macduff's by the flight of Malcolm and Donalbain. It starts a wake at this new and palpable crime. Thus Banquo's murder is the first step to Macbeth's downfall. It is significant that the young and loquacious Lennox, hitherto the frankest and least suspicious of the nobles, is now made the mouthpiece of their suspicion and hatred."—*Grierson.*

Notes and Explanations

1. **My former speeches**—what I have told you before. **Have but hit your thoughts**—have only squared with your ideas, Lennox begins cautiously, and resorts to irony ; but in the end he throws the mask.

2. **Which.....further**—which can fill in the meaning of my words ; since we think alike, you can supply from your own mind what I do not definitely state. **Only, I say**—all that I want to say in this.

3. **Things.....borne**—things have been very craftly manipulated. **Borne**—carried on. **Gracious**—a permanent epithet for Duncan.

4. **Pitied of Macbeth**—pitied by Macbeth. **Marry**—a corruption of Virgin Marry. The pronunciation and spelling were altered to evade the law against blasphemy on the stage.

3-4. **The gracious Duncan.....dead**—the idea seems to be this : Macbeth was kind and hospitable to Duncan, and the result was that Duncan was murdered. Lennox is sarcastic.

5. **Right-valiant**—truly brave. **Walke'd too late**—the reason for the murder of Banquo was that he walked too late in the evening and was done to death.

6. **Whom.....kill'd**—when Duncan was murdered, his two sons, Malcolm and Donalbain, ran away from Scotland. Macbeth was clever enough to shift the blame to them. It might as well be said that Fleance killed his father, Banquo, and ran away. Lennox comments on the palpable falsity of the reason of Banquo's murder given by Macbeth.

7. **Men.....too late**—from the murder of Banquo it follows that it would be rather risky for any man to be out of doors late at night.

8. **Who.....thought**—can anyone help thinking. **Monstrous** unnaturally wicked.

10. **Damned**—damnable. **Fact**—evil deed.

11. **How did it...Macbeth**—there is double-edged irony in this remark. The murder of Duncan would have grieved his two sons, But Macbeth made out that the two sons had murdered their father. And it was left to Macbeth to mourn Duncan's fate so grieviously, when he profited most by it. **Straight**—immediately.

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12. **In the pious rage**—full of noble indignation. Lennox is ironical. He was present when Macbeth killed the two grooms ; but he did not then think it unjustified. In fact he then believed that they were guilty of murder. **Delinquents**—culprits. **Tear**—mangle.

13. **Slaves of drink**—the two grooms who were overpowered with drink. **Thralls of sleep**—victims of death-like slumber so as to be unaware of what took place. Lennox urges this as reason why they could not have murdered Duncan.

14. **Was not.....done**—the killing of the two grooms must have been done under a noble impulse. Ironical. **Wisely too**—the killing of the grooms was wise because if they had been alive, they would have denied the charge of murder.

15. **Any heart alive**—particularly Macbeth's heart. The idea was that Macbeth would have found it extremely difficult to contradict the grooms if they had lived to protest their innocence.

16. **Deny't**—deny the charge of murder.

17. **Borne all things well**—managed the affairs very cleverly.

18. **Had he**—if he had. **Under his key**—in his custody.

19. **An't.....not**—as I am sure God will not allow him to have. **An**—if.

20. **What.....father**—the proper penalty for killing a father. The idea is that Macbeth would have been only too glad to get Malcolm and Donalbain executed on the charge of murdering their father. **So should Fleance**—so in the circumstance of Banquo's murder, his son Fleance would have shared the fate of Malcolm and Donalbain.

21. **Peace**—let us not talk so openly of it. **From**—on account of. **Broad**—frank ; blunt ; free.

21-22. **Failed his presence**—refused to be present. **Tyrants feast**—here Lennox openly calls Macbeth a tyrant or usurper.

23. **Lives in disgrace**—has incurred the displeasure of Macbeth.

24. **Bestows himself**—is in hiding. **The son of Duncan**—Malcolm.

25. **From whom this tyrant.....birth**—whom he debars from succession to the throne of Scotland. **Holds**—withholds. **Due of birth**—what he is entitled to by right of birth—the crown.

26. **Received**—welcomed.

27. **Of**—by. **Most pious Edward**—Edward the Confessor, who reigned from 1043 to 1066. In 1061 he was cannonized by Pope Alexandar III and given the title of confessor. He built Westminster Abbey. **Grace**—kindness.

28. **Malevolence for fortune**—the cruel fate which pursues him. **Nothing**—not in the least.

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29. **Takes from**—takes away from. **His high respect**—respect paid to him as one of royal rank.

30. **Holy king**—the pious Edward. **Upon his aid**—to come to the help of Malcolm. **Upon**—for the purpose of.

31. **Wake**—arouse. **Northumberland**—Siward. Earl of Northumberland who died in 1055. He supported Edward against Earl Godwin and his sons. He was maternal grandfather of Malcolm. According to Holinshed, Edward sent him with ten thousand men to assist Malcolm against Macbeth. **War-like Siward**—the brave young Siward, son of the Earl of Northumberland. Holinshed does not mention his name, which was Osberhrt or Osberne.

32. **That**—so that. **With Him above**—with God.

33. **Ratify**—confirm.

34. **Meat**—food.

35. **Free**—banish. **Bloody knives**—murderers. The reference may be to the Highland custom of sticking daggers on the table when dining in mixed company.

36. **Do faithful homage**—act in loyal obedience to the rightful sovereign. **Receive free honours**—be rewarded with honours not obtained at the sacrifice of conscience. **Free**—freely bestowed for meritorious service : (2) won without sacrificing one's freedom of conscience ; (3) enjoyable as free citizens.

37. **All which...now**—for all of which we now pine. **Pine for**—languish for want of. **This report**—the report that Macduff has gone to England.

38. **Exasperate**—exasperated ; angered. Some verbs ending in *te,t*, and *d* did not, for the sake of euphony take the regular inflexion *-ed* in the participle and perfect tense. **King**—Macbeth.

39. **Attempt of war**—measures for war against England. **Sent he**—did he send a messenger.

40. **With an absolute 'Sir, not I'**—on being dismissed with a point-blank refusal.

41. **Cloudy**—with a sullen look on his face. **Messenger**—Macbeth's Messenger. **Me**—ethic dative.

42. **Hums**—mutters. **As who should say**—as one who should say. **Rue**—repent.

43. **Clogs**—burdens.

40-42. (*Explanation*). **With an absolute.....answer**—Lennox meets a lord in this scene. The lord tells Lennox how Macduff defied Macbeth. Macbeth sent a messenger inviting Macduff to the State banquet. Macduff dismissed the messenger with a point blank refusal to come to Macbeth's palace. The messenger returned with a sullen look on his face, and kept murmuring to himself that

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Macduff would have to regret his conduct. This was a hint that Macduff's defiance of Macbeth would not go unpunished.

N. B. In a latter scene Macduff's wife and children were put to the sword when Macduff himself was out of the clutches of Macbeth.

43-44. **That**—that threat of the messenger. **Well might..... caution**—is adequate justification for Macduff's being careful. **To hold**—by holding.

44-45. **To hold.....provide**—by keeping as far out of the reach of Macbeth's revenge as his prudence will suggest to him.

46. **Unfold**—disclose.

47. **Message**—appeal for help against Macbeth. **Ere he come**—before he reaches England. **That**—so that. **Swift**—taking prompt effect.

48. **Our suffering country**—our country groaning under oppression.

49. **Hand accursed**—the tyranny of Macbeth.

ACT IV : SCENE I

Analysis. The witches are preparing to meet Macbeth. All the different ingredients of their charm—poisoned entrails toad that has bred poison for thirty-one days and nights, the slice of a snake, the eye of a newt, the toe of a frog, wool of a bat, the tongue of a dog, the adder's fork, the blind-worm's sting, the lizard's leg and owl's wing—are all thrown into the cauldron. They are boiled to prepare the charm. Then to these ingredients are added the scale of the dragon, the tooth of a wolf, the mummy of witches, the maw and gulf of the shark, the root of hemlock, dug in a dark night, the liver of a Jew, the gall of a goat, the branches of yew, the nose of a Turk, and the lips of Tartar, the finger of a baby strangled at birth in a ditch. This preparation is cooled by a baboon's blood. Hecate watches the scene, and praises them for the trouble they take in concocting their charm.

Macbeth now enters, and addresses the witches, demanding that they should answer his questions. Macbeth is given the choice whether he should hear his fate from their lips or from their masters. Macbeth prefers to hear it from their masters. Then sow's blood is poured into the charm, and the grease that has dripped from the corpse of a murderer on the gibbet is dropped into the fire. First rises the apparition of an armed head. It warns Macbeth against Macduff. Then the spirit descends, for it will not answer any second question. Next rises the apparition of a bloody child. It prophesies that Macbeth has nothing to fear from one born of woman. In that case Macbeth thinks he can spare Macduff; but he will rather make assurance doubly sure by

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dispatching Macduff. The third apparition is a child crowned with a tree in his hand. It prophesies that Macbeth will never be defeated until great Birnam wood comes to high Dunsinane hill. This seems to satisfy Macbeth most. Yet he is anxious to know whether Banquo's issue will succeed him. Last appears a shadowy procession of eight kings—Banquo's ghost following. Macbeth cries out against them as they appear one after another before him each wearing a crown. He begins to curse the witches. He is greeted with the mocking smile of Banquo. Without a word the apparitions vanish.

Then the witches dance to a strain of aerial music, and at last vanish with Hecate. Macbeth stands amazed. In answer to his shout appears Lennox. Macbeth asks him whether he saw the weird sisters. Lennox has not seen them. Macbeth seems to have heard the tramping of horses. Lennox tells him that messengers have arrived to inform him that Macduff is fled to England. So time seems to have anticipated Macbeth's dreaded purpose. He resolves that henceforth his plans should be at once executed. He is going to storm the castle of Macduff, and put his wife, his children and his followers all to the sword. It is not an idle boast. He is going to execute his purpose as quickly as he can.

Critical Note. The connection between Macbeth and the powers of evil is renewed and emphasised. But it is not a mere repetition of the previous scene. There is evidence of the changed order of things. The witches, like fate, are now drawing Macbeth to his doom. It is no 'metaphysical aid' which Macbeth is going to receive from them. It may be noted that the changed attitude of the witches corresponds to the growing desperation in Macbeth's heart.

Theatrically a stirring scene is imperatively demanded to sustain the Fourth Act. Dramatically, the reappearance of the witches marks the beginning of the reaction. These new prophecies precipitate an avalanche of crime and vengeance. The contents of the scene were suggested in part by a desire to please King James, who claimed descent from Banquo, and was an authority on witchcraft."—*Grierson.*

Notes and Explanations

STAGE DIRECTION—The Witches are seated in a Camera round the boiling cauldron. Their familiars, the cat, the hedge-hog, and Harpier, are somewhere outside. This scene takes place the day after the banquet.

1. **Thrice**—a mystic number. **Brinded**—brindled ; streaked ; having a brown body, marked with streaks of a darker hue. **Cat**—*i. e.*, Graymalkin of linel. The stealthy movements and nocturnal habits of the cat made her the favourite of witches. **Mew'd**—as a signal for the witches to begin their rites.

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2. **Thrice and once**—four times. **Hedge-pig**—hedge-hog, an animal of nocturnal habits, having its body covered with spines and able to roll itself up into a ball when chased. It was believed to suck or poison the udders of cows ; and mischievous elves were believed to assume its shape. **Whined**—cried out. The familiar of the second witch was a toad in line 1 ; here it is a hedge- hog.

3. **Happier**—the familiar of third witch (1) A corrupt form of *harpy*, a classical monster with the face of a woman, the body of a vulture, and sharp claws. The harpies were identified with demons who raised storms ; they carried off things, spoil whatever they touched, and predicted calamities. Or (2) "a fancy name, invented as suggesting by its sound and association, a being revenous, evil disposed and talon-claved."—*Nicholson*. **'Tis time**—it is the cry of Harpier.

4. **Cauldron**—large boiling vessel, shaped like a basin.

5. **Poison'd entrails**—the intestines of a poisoned or poisonous animal.

6. **Toad**—a favourite of witches.

8. **Swelter'd**—exuded (in the form of sweat). **Venom**—the shinglands of some classes of toads secrete a poisonous substance, phrynin, which has properties like those of digitalin. **Sleeping**—while sleeping. **Got**—Captured.

9. **Charmed pot**—magic cauldron. Note the construction, (1) "In the charmed pot boil thou first (the) toad, got sleeping that has (for) thirty-one days and night sweltered venom under a cold stone." (1) If there is no comma after 'venom',—In the charmed pot boil thou first (the) toad that (while) sleeping (for) thirty-one days and nights under a cold stone has got (all over its body) sweltered venom.

10. **Double**—let us doule. The repetition of the word indicates difficult work.

11. **Fire burn**—may the fire burn.

12. **Fillet**—slice (strictly, a narrow boneless strip rolled together and tied round). **Fenny**—living in low marshy lands.

14. **Newt**—water lizard.

15. **Wool**—down ; soft feathers.

16. **Adder**—viper, small poisonous snake. **Fork**—forked tongue. The adder's tongue is very long, protactile and forked at its tip. **Blind-worm**—slow-worm, a small reptile, which is a link between lizards and serpents. It has no poison-fangs and teeth are so small that it can hardly bite. Its eys are very small ; hence it is 'blind.' **Sting**—the blind-worm has no sting.

17. **Howlet**—owlet.

18. **For**—in order to produce. **Of powerful trouble**—highly efficacious in causing mischief.

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19. **Hell-broth**—soup for devils.

22. **Scale**—lamina, or thin horny plate (which protects the skin of fishes and reptiles). **Dragon**—a kind of lizard which leaps about from branch to branch of tree. In mythology, it is applied to a winged monster.

23. **Witches' mummy**—the dried, embalmed corpses of witches. **Mummy**—(1) the dried flesh of human bodies, embalmed with myrrh and spices ; (2) the liquor running from a mummy when newly prepared or heated. **Maw**—stomach. **Gulf**—gullet.

24. **Ravin'd**—(1) ravening (or revenous) ; (2) "glutted with prey."—*Stevens*. **Salt-sea**—living in salt water.

25. **Hemlock**—a poisonous plant. **Digg'd**—dug.

26. **Blaspheming**—talking irreverently of the Divine Being.

27. **Gall**—bill. **Goat**—the he-goat was a symbol of impurity in the Bible. **Slips**—narrow cutting from the branches. **Yew**—once believed to be poisonous. The tree is planted in a churchyard, and has thus a melancholy association.

28. **Silver'd**—sliced off. **In the moon's eclipse**—when there was an eclipse of the moon, and time was auspicious for witch-craft.

29. **Turk**—heathen, who was (from the Christian point of view) doomed to eternal damnation. The frequent was between Christians and Turks, made the latter hated all over Christendom. **Tartar**—a native of Central Asia. The excursions into Europe of the Mongol conqueror, Chingiz Khan, made the Tartars as notorious as the Turks and Tartars were types of cruelty, savagery and malignity.

30. **Birth-Strangled**—strangled to death as soon as born (because it was illegitimate).

31. **Ditch-deliver'd**—given birth to in a ditch. **Drab**—low class prostitute.

32. **Gruel**—broth. **Slab**—stickly ; viscious.

33. **Chaudron**—part of the entrails ; bowels.

34. **For**—to make up.

38. **Firm**—of right consistency. **Good**—effective.

39. **Commend your pains**—praise your troubles.

40. **Gains**—rewards from Hecate as Queen of the Witches to the three Witches who have served her so faithfully.

41. **About**—around.

42. **Elves**—the elves are, in Norse mythology, a class of being inferior to the gods, but still possessing great powers. The Black or Night Elves were ugly, brown dwarfs who lived in underground caves and were versed in the mysterious powers of nature. **hing**—circle.

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43. **Put in**—put into the cauldron.

STAGE DIRECTION. **Black spirits**—the song is in Middleton's *Witch*.

"Black spirits and white, red spirits and grey,
Mingle, mingle, mingle you that mingle may !
Titty, Tiffin
Keep it stiff in
Firedrake, Puckey,
Make it lucky ;
Liard, Robin,
You must top in,
Round, around, around, about, about,
All ill come running in, all good keep out !"

44. **By**—to Judge by. **Pricking**—there was a popular belief that sensation in the finger-tips had a prophetic—generally ominous significance.

45. **Something wicked**—wicked creature. That is how they think of Macbeth. **This way**—from the right or the left accordingly as it was the right of left humb that pricked.

46. **Open, locks**—either the two lines are a magic formula or the cavern has a door which is locked.

48. **Secret**—mysterious ; supernatural. **Black**—sinster ; wicked ; addicted to 'black magic.' Witches were divided into white, grey and black—according to the degree of malice attributed to them. **Midnight**—loving midnight or working at midnight. **Hags**—witches.

49. **A deed.....name**—a deed so wicked that we cannot give a name to it.

50. **Conjure**—abjure ; solemnly call upon. **That.....profess**—magic art. **Profess**—follow as your profession.

51. **Howe'er you come**—to whatever evil methods you may have to resort.

52. **Untie**—let loose. *N. B.* In Homer Æolus, keeper of the winds, gave Ulysses a leathern bag in which all the adverse winds were tied up. But the companions of Ulysses untied the bag, with the result that the winds broke out and drove him back. In Virgil, Æolus keeps all the winds locked up in a mountain-cavern. In the Middle Ages, the evil spirits were supposed to control winds and storms.

52-53. **Fight Against the churches**—*i.e.*, better the church steeples. There is the idea of antagonism between religion and witchcraft. **Yesty**—yeasty ; foaming ; seething.

54. **Confound**—destroy. **Navigation**—sailing ships. **Abstract for concrete.**

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55. **Bladed corn**—corn in the blade (*i. e.*, the flat narrow green leaf) and not in full ear (*i. e.*, the spike which contains the flower or seeds). **Lodged**—laid low ; beaten down. Compare : "Our sighs and they shall lodge the summer corn."—*Richard II.*

56. **Topple**—come tumbling down. **Warders**—sentinels.

57. **Pyramids**—pyramid-shaped structures. **Slope**—bend down.

58. **Treasure**—rich store.

59. **Nature's germens**—germs of life in nature. **Tumble**—be wholly destroyed.

60. **Even till.....sicken**—even till the work of reducing the world to chaos was carried to such a point that destruction itself became disgusted.

50-61. (*Explanation*). **I conjure you.....ask you**—Macbeth implores the witches to revel the picture to him, no matter what means they employ. They can exercise potent magic art. Let them reveal the future to him by means of their magic art. By their magic art they let loose the winds which blow against the church steeples ; lash the sea into fury where ships are sunk ; beat down bladed corn, uproot trees, pull down castles on the heads of sentinels, cause palaces and pyramid-like structures to stoop to their bases—and scatter and destroy the seeds of life in nature till destruction itself is surfeited. Whatever may be the result of the exercise of their magic art—even the total destruction of the world—let the witches answer the questions he will put to them. It is again the tone of a desperate man. The uncertainty of the future is the worst torture he has to endure—and he must set his mind at rest ; whatever the cost.

61. **We'll answer**—we agree to answer your questions.

62. **Thou'dst rather**—you prefer to.

63. **Masters**—the apparitions that are called up, seem to belong to a higher order of coil spirits than the witches.

64. **Pour in**—sow's blood is poured into the contents of the cauldron. The previous ritual was not adequate for invoking the contents of the cauldron, and new fuel is added to the fire. When the potent charm is wrought to call forth these higher spirits.

65. **Nine**—a magic number. **Farrow**—litter of pigs. One of the laws of Kenneth II of Scotland runs—"If a sow eat her pigs, let her be stoned to death and buried. **That's sweaten**—that has sweated.

66. **Gibbet**—an upright post with a cross-piece from which criminals were formerly hanged, and on which they were exposed after execution.

67. **Into the flame**—the grease of the murderer (who has been hanged is to be thrown into the fire to kindle it into a brighter

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blaze. **High or low**—whatever your status in the spirit-world. *N. B.* "Shakespeare multiplies all the circumstances of horror. The babe, whose finger is used must be strangled in its birth : the grease must not only be human, but must have dropped from a gibbet, the gibbet, of a murder, and even the sow, whose blood is used, must have offended nature by devouring her own farrow." —*Johnson.*

68. **Office**—function. **Deftly**—smartly. **Show**—(1) show thyself, *i. e.*, take a visible shape ; (2) show office, *i. e.*, "prove your knowledge of Macbeth's future."—(*Zeugma*)

STAGE DIRECTION. The First 'Apparition symbolises Macbeth's head cut off by Macduff and taken by him to Malcolm. **Armed**—wearing a steel helmet.

69. **Unknown power**—supernatural being possessed of occult powers. The 'armed head' is Macbeth's own, but Macbeth cannot recognise it because of the visor. Note the dramatic irony.

70. **Hear hit speech.....nought**—you need not put your question to the apparition, for he knows what you want to ask. Silence was necessary at these magic ceremonies.

71. **Beware**—be on your guard against.

72. **Dismiss me : enough**—spirits invoked by magic were supposed to be intolerant of questions and eager to return to the spirit-world.

STAGE DIRECTION. **Descends**—the Apparition are put up and pulled down though trap-doors on the stage.

73. **Good caution**—kindly warning.

74. **Harp'd my fear aright**—correctly hit upon the subject of my fear.

76. **More potent**—more powerful.

STAGE DIRECTION. The Second Apparition symbolises Macduff who was "untimely ripped" from his mother's womb (V. viii. 15-16).

78. **Had.....thee**—I have all ears to hear you ; even if I had more than two ears, I would with all of them attend exclusively to what you had to say. **Three**—the Apparition had addressed him thrice.

79. **Bloody**—(1) spirited ; (2) murderous. **Bold**—(1) brave ; (2) reckless. **Resolute**—(1) determined ; (2) obstinate. **Laugh—to scorn**—(1) treat as ridiculous ; (2) be overconfident in your sense of immunity from.

80. **Power of man**—(1) human, as opposed to supernatural power ; (2) strength of man, born of their mothers in the normal way. **None of woman born**—many other heroes of legend and tradition were, like Macduff, not "born of woman." For example,

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Walsung, the ancestor of Sigurd ; and Rustum, the hero of the *Shahnama* of Firdausi.

82. **What need I fear of thee**—there is no necessity of fearing you.

83. **Make.....sure**—though there is no fear of Macduff (because I need not fear any one born of woman), I will take no chance with him—I will make my position doubly secure by killing Macduff. **Assurance**—confidence ; security.

84. **Take**—exact. **Bond**—guarantee, ensuring fulfilment of the prediction, made by the Second Apparition. **Take a bond of fate**—bind over fate by a pledge (lest she break her word, just given). The reference is to "a conditional bond, under or by virtue of which when forefeited, double the principal sum was recoverable." —*Rushton*. The 'bond' means here Macbeth's decision to kill Macduff. **Thou shalt not live**—I as king have decided that you will not be allowed to live. Macbeth is not going to take any risks, though fate is firendly to him.

85. **That**—so that. **Pale-hearted**—making one's heart pale. Causative. **Pale-hearted fear**—fear that makes me craven-hearted. **It lies**—that the dangers with which it threatens me are non-existent. But will he be able to still the voice of conscience by his recklessness and repetition of cries ?

86. **Sleep in spite of thunder**—sleep in peace however dangers may threaten me.

83-86. (*Explanation*). **But yet I'll make.....thunder**—Macbeth is assured by the apparition, called up by the witches, that he has nothing to fear on earth. In fact no man, born of woman, can do any harm to him though he is told that Macduff is his mortal enemy. However, he is not going to take any risks. Macduff (since he is born of woman) can do him no harm, yet Macbeth will not let Macduff live. He will take an additional precaution by having Macduff murdered ; and so he will extract from Fate a definite pledge that her promise will be kept. By his double precaution he will be able to conquer all fears that burden his heart and break in upon his sleep. Now that he has the assurance of Fate, which he will further secure by the murder of Macduff he will be able to sleep in peace, however, dangers may threaten him.

STAGE DIRECTION. The Third Apparition symbolises Malcolm, who is crowned king after Macbeth—and who, when invading Scotland, ordered his soldiers to carry each a bough of Birnam wood in his hand.

87. **Issue of a king**—prince of the blood. **Issue**—because the Apparition is a child. **King**—because it wears a crown.

88-89. **Round And top of sovereignity**—the crown. Several ideas are condensed into this phrase. **Round**—(1) circle (referring to the shape of the crown), (2) completeness (referring to the

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crown as the perfect symbol of royal rank) : (3) that part of the crown which touches and encircles the head. **Top**—the jewelled part of the crown (*literally*) ; the summit of earthly ambition (*figuratively*).

90. **Lion-Mettled**—as brave as the lion. **Proud**—disdainful of the power of your enemies. **Take no care**—do not mind.

91. **Chafes**—shows angry impatience. **Frets**—is vexed and annoyed. Both words refer to popular indignation against Macbeth in Scotland. **Conspires**—Malcolm, Macduff, Siward and others who are out of Scotland.

92. **Vanquish'd**—defeated.

93. **Birnam wood**—Birnam is a hill near Dunkeld, and twelve miles north-west of Perth. It was once wooded and formed part of a royal forest. **Dunsinane hill**—one of the Sidlaw Hills, seven miles north-east of Perth. On its top are remnants of a fortress, popularly known as Macbeth's castle. The plain of Starthmore lies between Birnam and Dunsinane hills.

93-94. **Great Birnamwood.....him**—*N. B.* Moving forests are mentioned in several Teutonic myths. Professor Schwartz mentions, in his *Notobolia* a story in which king Gruenewald is thus addressed by his daughter :

"Father, you must yield, or die,
I see the green-wood drawing nigh."

The following passage occurs in an old English translation of a life of Alexander the Great :—"Then Alexander commanded all his men that each of them should cut down a branch of a tree, and bear them forth with them and drive before them, all manner of beasts that they might find in the way : and, when the Persians saw them from the high hills, they wondered at them greatly."

95. **Who can**—no one can. Rhetorical question. **Impress**—force into his service.

96. **Unfix**—loosen. **His**—its. **Earth-bound**—fixed in the earth. **Bodements**—auguries ! omens.

97. **Rebellion's head**—rebellious forces. **Head**—armed force ; hostile advance. **Rise**—rise in the revolt.

98. **Rise**—uproot itself from the ground. **Our**—royal plural. **High-placed**—*i. e.*, seated on the throne. **Our high-placed Macbeth**—Macbeth's self-exaltation makes him speak at himself in the third person.

99. **Live.....nature**—live his allotted span of life. Macbeth is, thus, convinced that he will die natural death.

99-100. **Pay.....custom**—die in the natural course. **Pay**—yield up. **Breath**—life. **Time and moral custom**—the rule that all men must die in course of time. The image of a debtor who

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pays his debt only at the last moment, when he cannot possibly avoid payment.

97-100 (*Explanation*). **Rebellion's head.....custom**—The Third Apparition informs Macbeth that he will never be vanquished until the Birnam wood moves to Dunsinane. He is now convinced that he will live his allotted span of life, and die a natural death. He has now no need to fear any rebellion. There is the prospect of a rebellious force invading Scotland. What chance can this rebellious force have when Macbeth cannot be defeated in battle until Birnam wood moves to Dunsinane ? It is unlikely that Birnam wood will ever shift from its place and come to Dunsinane. Macbeth may, therefore, hold himself secure against any mortal enemy. He hopes, therefore, to live on till his term of life expires—he is not going to die by violence. Note that Macbeth is led to fortify himself by false hopes.

100-01. **My heart throbs**—I am all excitement. **Art**—(1) magic art ; (2) gift of prophecy.

102. **Tell so much**—convey to you such knowledge.

104. **I will be satisfied**—I must have my curiosity satisfied. **Deny me this**—if you deny me the satisfaction on this curiosity.

105. **An eternal.....you**—may you be damned for ever !

106. **Sinks**—*i. e.*, disappears below the stage. Noise—music of hautboys.

110. **Show.....heart**—reveal to him the future line of kings (who are not descended from him) and let his heart be filled with bitterness.

111. **Like-shadows**—as they are not to speak, as the Apparitions did. **So**—also like shadows.

STAGE DIRECTION. **Show**—dumb show. **Eight Kings**—Robert II (1371-1390) ; Robert III (1390-1406) ; James I (1424-1437) ; James II (1437-1460) ; James III (1460-1488) ; James IV (1488-1513) ; James V (1513-1542) ; James VI (1567-1625) who becomes James I of England. Mary Queen of Scots, the mother of the last, reigned from 1542 to 1567. **Glass**—the mirror which reflected the faces of the kings who came after the Union of Scotland and England under one sovereign.

112. **Thou**—Robert II, a descendant of Banquo. **Art too—like**—resemble so closely that I cannot doubt the relationship. **Spirit of Banquo**—the ghost that Macbeth saw in Act III, Scene IV. **Down**—either get off the stage or put down your crown.

113. **Thy crown.....eye-balls**—the crown your wear seems to burn into my eyes. It is too painful a sight to bear. **Sear**—burn ; scorch. **Hair**—colour of your hair.

114. **Thou.....brow**—Robert III. **Gold-bound**—wearing a gold crown. **Like the first**—like that of the first.

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115. **Third**—James I. **The former**—the first two. **Filthy**—loathsome. **Filthy hags**—Macbeth curses the witches because their art does not properly serve his ends.

116. **Fourth**—James II. **Start** come out of your sockets.

117. **What**—uttered in surprise and anger as he sees the fifth King, James III. **Line**—line or dynasty of king. **Stretches out**—extend. **Crack of doom**—(1) thunderous announcing of the day of Judgment ; ".....and there followed lightnings and voices, and thunders and an earthquake, and great hail."—(*Revelation*, XI, 19). **Crack**—noise. **Doom**—judgment.

118. **Another**—James IV, the sixth in the procession. **Seventh**—James V.

119. **Eighth**—James VI of Scotland and James I of England. **Glass**—mirrors were used in magic.

120. **More**—more kings. A compliment to the Stuart dynasty, which must have flattered the vanity of James I.

121. **That**—who. **Two-fold balls and treble sceptres**—*N.B.* A handsome compliment to James I, who was the first King of United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland. The *ball* is golden orb which a king holds in his hand during the coronation ceremony. James had 'twofold balls' because he was first crowned King of Scotland at Stirling on July 24, 1567, and again crowned King of England at Westminster on March 24, 1602. Some see in it a reference to the two islands, Great Britain and Ireland. The sceptre or rod is another part of royal insignia. 'Treble sceptres' might also refer to the title—*King of Great Britain, France and Ireland*, which James I assumed on October 24, 1604—a title borne by Edward VI and Elizabeth before him, and retained by British sovereigns till 1802.

At a performance given at St. John's College, Oxford, in honour of James I in 1605, one of the student, in the guise of a nymph, addressed the King thus : "Hail, most powerful monarch of Britain, Ireland, and France." Of course the title—"King of France" was nominal.

122. **'Tis true**—the prophecy of the Witches that Banquo's issue will become kings, will be fulfilled.

123. **Blood-bolter'd**—having his hair matted with blood. Macbeth sees the phantom of Banquo just as he appeared in the banquet-scene. Compare : "twenty trenched gashes on his head" and "gray locks." Bolter'd a provincial word of Shakespeare's own country, Warwickshire.

124. **Points.....his**—points at the procession of Kings as all sprung from him. This is a moment of triumph for, Banquo's spirit. **Is this so**—that's that.

125. **All this is so**—all that you see is to be true.

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126. **Amazedly**—"in blank perplexity, as if paralysed by astonishment."—*Clark and Wright*.

127. **Cheer we**—let us cheer. **Spirites**—spirits.

128. **Delights**—diversions.

129, **I'll charm.....sound**—by means of magic spell shall made the air produce music.

130. **Perform.....round**—dance in a circle in a fantastic manner. **Antick**—fantastic. **Round**—circular dance.

131. **That**—so that. **Kindly**—rather in appreciation of our loyalty.

132. **Duties**—reverence (as shown by subjects to a king). **His welcome**—an ironical reference to Macbeth's greeting to the witches—"How now, you secret, and midnight hangs !!" **Pay**—repay.

133. **Pernicious**—wicked.

134. **Aye**—for every. **Accursed in the calendar**—marked as unholy or ominous in the calendar.

135. **Without there**—you who are standing outside the cavern.

137. **Came.....you**—did they not pass you when they went ?

138. **Infected be**—a plague on. **Air.....ride**—Macbeth assumes that the witches have disappeared into the air.

139. **Deman'd.....them**—Macbeth himself trusts the witches and so he is damning himself. Dramatic irony.

140. **Who was't came by**—who was it that came ?

141. **Bring you word**—come to inform you.

144. **Thou anticipatest.....exploits**—you prevent me from executing my dreadful purpose. Macduff's flight to England forestalls Macbeth's purpose of murdering him. **My dread exploits**—the fearful deeds that I contemplate.

145. **Flighty**—fleeting. A purpose is 'flighty' because there is danger that it may very soon become impossible of execution. **O'ertook**—overtaken ; realized in action.

146. **Unless the deed go with it**—unlees it is carried into effect as soon as it is conceived.

147. **Very firstlings of my heart**—the impulses that are the first to be born in my heart. **Firstlings**—first fruits ; earliest offspring.

148. **Firstlings of my hand**—the task to which I must first set my hand.

144-148. (*Explanation*). **Time, thou anticipatest.....hand**—**Macbeth** is both angered and disappointed by the show of eight

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kings, who represented Banquo's line. So after all the throne would pass from him to Banquo's children. For the benefit of Banquo's children he has soiled his hands with blood, outraged his conscience and risked his own soul. This unhappy truth now comes home to him. But as soon as he comes out of the cavern after the witches suddenly disappear, he learns that Macduff has fled to England—and so time seems to have robbed him of the execution of his purpose. Now he realises that unless a purpose be executed as soon as it is formed, it eludes us. A purpose or plan should be carried out as soon as it is formed ; or it is never executed. So Macbeth resolves that henceforth he will never miss the opportunity of giving immediate effect to the thought or purpose born in his mind. There should be no interval between decision and execution. For example, if he had killed Macduff instead of sending a messenger to him, Macduff could not have escaped to England.

149. **Crown my thoughts with acts**—consummate in deeds what I intend in thought. **Be.....done**—let resolve and execution go together, let me not loose time in giving effect to my idea.

150. **Surprise**—take by storm.

151. **Seize upon Fife**—confiscate the property of Macduff. **Give.....sword**—put to the sword.

153. **Trace.....line**—are related to him by blood. **Time**—family stock. **No...fool**—it is no idle boast of mine.

154. **This deed**—the killing of Macbeth's wife, children and relations. **Cool**—weaken.

156. **No mere sights**—I have seen enough of sights ! Macbeth "has now killed the conscience that spoke to him in visions and hallucinations."

ACT IV : SCENE II

Analysis. Ross has come to tell Lady Macduff that her husband has left for England. She cannot understand why he should have left for England so abruptly and is upset. She cannot help thinking that his flight was nothing short of madness, and would make him out to be a traitor. In any case his action cannot be defended as sensible when he has left his wife and his children, his mansion and his estate in a place where he does not consider himself to be safe. Lady Macduff thinks that her husband has not sufficient love for his wife and children, for the poor wren will fight for her young ones against the owl at the risk of her own life. In his action she can see no love but fear. Ross implores her in vain to be patient, and not to misjudge her husband. The times are troublous, and even innocent men are regarded as traitor. Fear besets every mind, but it does not know what it fears. Ross cannot stay any longer lest he may betray his own feeling, and takes a hasty leave of Lady Macduff.

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Now follows a dialogue between Lady Macduff and her young son. Lady Macduff cannot make out why her husband should have left so abruptly and ask her young son how he will do without a father. But her young son can have no idea of the peril which his mother apprehends. He wants to know why his father is a traitor. Lady Macduff explain to him that a traitor is one who swears and lies, and that a traitor must be hanged. Her son replies that if everybody who swears and lies, must be hanged, then the liars and swearers must be fools ; who being so numerous, permit the few honest folk to hang them. Lady Macduff cannot but admire the innocent wit of her son. In any case he does not believe that his father is dead, because he does not see his mother weep for him.

At this stage a messenger enters. He warns Lady Macduff of the approaching danger, the nature of which he cannot explain. He advises immediate flight, and at once leaves. Lady Macduff is in despair. Where should she fly ? But she has done no harm, and she cannot understand why any danger should threaten her. She realises that it is a poor womanly defence to say that she has done no harm. Then enter the murderers. Their ghastly faces strike terror into Lady Macduff's heart. They ask for Macduff, and call him a traitor. Macduff's young son protests, and is at once stabbed to death. Lady Macduff is pursued by the murderers.

Critical Note. Macduff's sudden leaving for England has not been sufficiently accounted for. Ross cannot give Lady Macduff any satisfactory reason. In the next scene it appears that Macduff has come to England to invite Malcolm to invade Scotland and dethrone the tyrant Macbeth. But this mission could have been entrusted to Ross, who soon follows Macduff to England. Macduff must have been aware of his personal danger. It could not have been averted by his flight to England, when he left his wife and children behind. The only dramatic motive that we can assign for Macduff's departure for England is to give an opportunity to Macbeth to reveal his further degradation—in his delight in wanton cruelty. The point to note is that his cup of inequity is now full. The scene invites the doom.

As Coleridge points out, there is a sort of relief in the scene —a relief charged with the most poignant pathos, and irony. The innocent prattle of Macduff's young son, who is unsuspecting of any danger, is a master-stroke of irony, for it is immediately followed by the atrocious murder of mother and son, which paints Macbeth as the blackest villain on earth.

"Mr. Bradley maintains 'that Macduff's flight was noble is beyond doubt.' There is little doubt that Shakespeare meant it to be so : yet one wishes that he had made it clear in this scene, of the next, why Macduff's flight was necessary for his country's salvation. He has relieved himself of the trouble by paraphrasing

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the next scene from Holinshed. But in Holinshed Macduff's motive is fear ; at length Macduff to avoid peril of life, purposed with himself to pass into England. Shakespeare's Macduff, like his Banquo, is an imperfect creation."—*Grierson.*

Notes and Explanations

STAGE DIRECTION. Macbeth must have acted very promptly after his interview with the witches. Not more than one day can have elapsed between this scene and the last. The scene is in a room in Macduff's castle. "On the Fife-shire coast, about three miles from Desert, stand two quadrangular towers, supposed to be the ruins of Macduff's castle."—*Knight.*

1. **What hath he done**—what crime was he guilty of. **He**—Macduff. **Fly the land**—run away from Scotland. Macduff has left for England without his wife's knowledge. The news is now broken to her by Ross. But she does not understand why Macduff should steal away like that. She therefore asks. "What crime has he committed that he should run away, as if to avoid punishment." Holinshed make Macduff run away to England for his personal safety ; but Shakespeare wishes his audience to understand that Macduff left Scotland for patriotic motives, and at the risk of being misunderstand even by his wife. This point has not been developed in the play.

2. **You must.....madam**—you should not judge him hastily. **He had none**—there is no point in telling me that I should have patience, when my husband had none ; he left in unseemly haste and without even informing me.

3. **His flight was madness**—his running away to England was an act of insane folly.

3-4. **When our actions.....traitors**—sometimes when a man is not guilty of treason, his nervous fears brand him as traitor. A man may not have committed any act of treason (as Macduff has not), but he would be looked upon as a traitor, if, afraid of being punished for an offence of which he was not guilty, he would run away (as Macduff had done). **Our**—a colloquial indefinite use. **Do not**—do not make us traitors. Lady Macduff is thinking, not of her desertion by her husband, but of the political reasons that may have prompted him to flee.

5. **Whether.....fear**—whether his flight was due to prudence or to fear. But Lady Macduff can see no wisdom in her husband's flight, when he has left behind his wife and children in a place where he thinks himself unsafe.

7. **Titles**—estates ; possessions.

8. **He loves us not**—if he had loved me and his children as he should, he would not have thought of his own safety alone.

9. **Natural touch**—affection inherited from nature. **Touch**—

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delicate feeling. Compare : "One touch of nature makes the whole world kin."—*Troilus and Cressida*. **He wants.....touch**—He is devoid of affection for wife and children. **For**—because. **The poor wern**—so humble and helpless a creature as the wren. **Wren**—a song-bird with docked tail and short wings. It is not absolutely the smallest of birds, but it is among the smallest. Some hold that Shakespeare's description is true of British birds ; others say that he refers to the golden-crested wren. It is doubtful whether wren would have the courage to fight an owl, and whether an owl should attack the nest of a wren.

10. **Most deminuitive**—tiniest.

11. **Her young ones in her nest**—in defence of her young ones.

12. **All is...love**—my husband's flight has nothing to do with love for us. It had been prompted entirely by fear of his personal safety. **All is the fear**—fear seems to have been his sole consideration. **Nothing is the love**—love counts for nothing at all.

13. **As little is the wisdom**—nor is there any evidence of wisdom in his flight.

14. **Runs.....reason**—is absolutely opposed to reason.

12-14. (*Explanation*). **All is.....reason**—Ross breaks the news of Macduff's departure for England to his wife. Lady Macduff cannot understand why he should have left for England so abruptly and without informing her. However Ross may try to defend Macduff, his wife cannot say that he has acted wisely. She rather believes that her husband has little affection for her and his children. His flight can have nothing to do with love ; it has been all prompted by his fear of his personal safety. Nor is there any evidence of foresight in his flight, because it cannot be defended by any reason. As Lady Macduff thinks, her husband's flight may convict him as traitor, though he is not guilty of any act of treason.

15. **Coz**—contraction of cousin. **School yourself**—hold yourself in patience. **For**—as for.

16. **Judicious**—balanced in the judgment.

17. **Fits o' the reason**—(1) Sudden dangers that may arise from the present political crisis in the country—'fits' may be explained as the convulsions of a patient in the critical stage of fever. (2) Uncertain emergencies that may arise on account of present political crisis in the country—'fits' may be explained as a lunatic's periodical outbursts of violence. The two senses may perhaps be mixed up. (3) What befits the time, how one should behave in the present circumstances. **Dare not speak**—cannot reveal to you all that I know, as these are political secrets.

18. **Cruel are the times**—the times are hard to bear. **When we are traitors**—(1) when we act as if we were really traitors (referring to Macduff's desertion of his family) ; (2) when we are

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wrongly charged with being traitors (referring to Macduff's conduct as interpreted by Macbeth).

19. **Know ourselves**—(1) know that we are traitors ; (2) be sure of the motives and results of our own action ; (3) know the realintentions of one another.

19-20. **Hold.....fear**—(1) interpret current reports according to what our tears dictate-'hold' *i. e.*, judge or estimate ; 'from', *i. e.*, in the light of ; (2) believe in every report because we fear that it is true—'hold,' *i.* e., entertain ; 'from,' *i. e.*, on account of ; (3) incur the risk of being misunderstood on account of conduct into which fear dives us-'hold', *i. e.*, given shape to, supply material for 'from', *i. e.*, through, by means of. **Know not what we fear**—cannot define our fears. The first 'what we fear' is subjective—the feeling of fear in our own minds ; the second is objective—the things we fear, the grounds of our fear.

21. **Float**—drift about, without being to direct ourselves. **Wild**—tempestuous.

22. **Each way and move**—(1) in each direction and according to each movement of the sea. This may mean ; (i) this way and that according to the state of wind or current, or (ii) up and down as each wave swell and sinks; (2) Transposition for 'and move each way' where 'move' would be verb, *i. e.*, toss about or are carried hither and thither.

18-22. (*Explanation*). **But cruel are the times.....move**—Ross is trying, to jusify Macduff's flight by referring to the unsettled conditions in the country. In these days of trouble an innocent man will be looked upon as a traitor ; men hardly know each other, each seeming to be a traitor to the other ; they are apt to believe every report, which seems to be suggested by their own fears, nor can they define what it is that they fear. They seem to be tossed to and fro on the wave of conjecture ; their minds are beset with doubt and suspicion, and they seem to be the prey of every gust of passion and prejudice. In these lines, Ross gives Lady Macduff vague hints of the troubles and perils that are incidental to the times. All he wants to convey to Lady Macduff is that her husband must have a political motive in leaving for England so abruptly, and without her knowledge.

23. **Shall not.....again**—it will certainly not be long before I meet you again here.

74. **Things.....cease**—again a vague hint that the times are full of peril which must come to an end or grow still worse. **Climb upward**—there is the idea of the state of things improving.

25. **To what.....before**—Ross implies that a turning-point is soon to arrive in the state of affairs in the country, and the days of peace and prosperity may return. The point is that the position in Scotland has become so desperate that things must either mend

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or end. Whenever man's fortunes touch their lowest ebb, either he dies and thus escapes all pain, or his luck turns and his position gradually improves till he retains his former happiness. Ross is hinting to Lady Macduff that present state of things cannot forever continue ; that either Macbeth will triumph, or his absolute tyranny would be put to an end ; and peace and prosperity would return to the country. The metaphor is taken from the wheel of fortune which in revolving causes good luck to alternate with bad. Or it may continue the previous image. A vessel floating upon a wild and violent sea, and being caught between two waves, will either sink or be tossed upon the crest of the waves to safety.

25. **My pretty cousin**—this is addressed to Macduff's son.

26. **Father'd.....fatherless**—though he has a father he is without a father, because he is left unprotected by his father.

27. **I am.....fool**—I am so easily overcome by emotion. **Should I stay longer**—if I were to stay longer.

28. **It would.....discomfort**—I would disgrace myself by sheding tears, and cause discomfort to you.

30. **Sirrah**—a corruption of 'sir' ; it is usually a term of address for inferiors. But it is spoken here in pitying affection rather than in contempt. **Your father's dead**—since his fasher has left him unprotected, he may as well think that his father is dead—he is fatherless.

31. **What will you do now**—how will you get on without a father ? **How will you live**—who will bring you up ?

32. **As birds do**—the child's idea is : I can live without a father's protection in the same manner as birds. Lamartine calls these words 'a sublime and candid reply.' **With.....flies**—by feeding on worms and flies like birds. *N. B.* In an emotional crisis Shakespeare always brings in a pun ; so Lady Macduff in her acute distress puns on 'live'. When she asks her son—how will you live ?—she means how will he manage to grow up ? When her son replies that he will live as birds do, the mother takes the sense to be to live by feeding on.

33. **So do they**—in this manner the birds live.

34. **Poor bird**—infinite pity swells up in the mother's heart in the consideration of son's innocence and ignorance of pain and peril. **Thou'dst.....lime**—in your ignorance of pain and evil and in your innocence you can never fear the danger to which the bird is exposed. **Lime**—birdlime. This is a sticky substance which is spread on a stick. If a bird sits on such a stick placed in front of its nest, it cannot disengage its feet and is readily caught.

35. **Pit-fall**—covered pit used as a trap. **Gin**—snare.

36. **Poor birds.....for**—they are not set for poor birds. The boy means to say that as a poor bird he is not worth entrapping.

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"In life traps are not set for the poor, but for the rich.'—*Clark and Wright.*

37. **My father.....saying**—the boy is sensible enough to believe that his father is not dead, when his mother shows no sign of grief. **For all your saying**--however emphatically you may say it.

39. **How will you do for a husband**—the boy is 'cute enough to see that the problem of not having a husband must be as serious for his mother as the problem of not having a father for himself.

40. **I can.....market**—husband can be easily bought at any market.

41. **Then.....again**—if husband can be bought, they will have to be disposed of again. The young boy implies that if a husband can be bought like merchandise, such husband is not worth having.

42. **With all thy wit**—using the whole of your intelligence.

43. **With wit enough for thee**-- with wisdom beyond your years.

44. **Was.....traitor**—the boy has heard the word 'traitor' twice mentioned by Ross and his mother, but does not know its meaning.

47. **Swears and lies**—violates the oath of allegiance to the king. It should be noted that the boy takes 'swears' to mean use of profane language, and 'lie' to mean 'tell a falsehood'. He does not understand anything of loyalty to the king.

48. **And be all traitors that do so**—are all who swear and lie traitors.

45. **Honest men**—men who are not false to their oaths, and also men who do not swear and lie.

55. **Then the liars.....fools**—the boy argues thus : those who swear and lie are more numerous than the honest men ; they must be fools for letting the honest men, so few in number, hang them.

56. **Beat the honest men**—overcome the honest men. The idea is that if the liars and swearers were to run against the honest men, the former could easily hang the latter.

58. **Poor monkey**—a term of endearment, suggested by the child's precocious and somewhat shrewd remarks.

60. **If he.....him**—again the boy shows his power of reasoning if his father were dead, his mother must have wept for him.

61. **Would not**--do not feel inclined to weep in the event of my father's death.

61-62. **It were a good sign.... new father**—it would show that I could not be long without a father.

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63. **Poor prattler, how thou talk'st**—the innocent prattle of the boy disengages Lady Macduff's mind from her fear of peril for the moment. The irony is most pointed in that this innocent pratile of the boy is soon followed by the warning of danger, and close on that the appearance of the murderers.

64. **Bless you**—may God bless you ! **Dame**—lady. **I am not to you known**—I am stranger to you.

65. **In your state.....perfect**—I know quite well who you are and the noble rank that is yours. **State**—status. **Perfect**—well acquainted with.

66. **Doubt**—fear. **Some danger nearly**—a danger is close to you.

67. **Homely**—humble.

68. **Be not found here**—go away from this place. **Hence**— leave this place at once.

69. **To fright you thus**—in frightening you in this manner. **Thus**—by informing you of the danger ahead and advising you to fly from here at once. **Methinks**—it seems to me. **Savage**—rude.

70. **Do worse to you**—(1) do worse than frighten you ; it would either mean cruelly murder you or fail to warn you of imminent danger ; (frighten you more thoroughly by mentioning details and thus preventing you from escaping while there is time). **Fell**—fierce.

71. **Which.....person**—which is imminent and will fall upon you soon.

72. **Abide**—stay here. *N. B.* The messenger is taken to be (1) representative of the feelings of the general people ; (2) a messenger from Lady Macbeth who no longer shares her husband's murderous plans ; (3) one of the murderers themselves, moved to pity.

73. **I have done no harm**—Lady Macduff argues that as she has done no harm, she ought to fear no evil.

74. **Earthly world**—sinful terrestrial world as opposed to the kingdom of heaven. **I am...world**—the earth is the abode of sin, and there is no excuse that a person will suffer no evil because ; he or she has done no harm.

75. **Laudable**—praise worthy. **Sometime**—sometimes.

76. **Dangerous folly**—an act of foolishness that involves the person in danger.

77. **Put up**—urge. **Womanly defence**—an excuse that a woman may put forward.

78. **To say**—by saying, or when I say. **What are these faces**—"there is in these words a whole drama of amazement, terror, and disgust,"—(Darmesteter). It is a very condensed and compact

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expression, implying, (1) who are these men ? (2) what is their business ? (3) why have they such fierce looks ?

80-81. **I hope.....him**—I hope that he is in no place so unsanctified such as you may find him there. **Unsanctified**—profane; accursed. **Such as**—murderers like yourselves.

82. **Shag-hair'd**—(1) having a prominent growth of hair in the ears ; (2) with the hair falling about the ears. "How spirited the boy's prompt denial of the charge levelled by the villains against his father and how chivalrous and self-forgetful his dying words to his mother !" *Scrimgeaur*. **Egg**—young rascal.

83. **Fry of treachery**—offspring of a traitor. **Fry**—fish fresh from the spawn.

STAGE DIRECTION. **Exeunt murderers following her**—from the next scene we learn that Lady Macduff and several other children of hers are murdered.

ACT IV : SCENE III

Analysis. Macduff on coming to England, has an interview with Malcolm. Malcolm withdraws with him to a solitary place, where they can talk freely. Macduff complains of Macbeth's oppression and tyranny under which Scotland is groaning. It is time that this tyranny should be broken, and peace and justice established in Scotland. At first Malcolm is distrustful of Macduff. He promises to redress the wrong when he finds suitable time. Now Macbeth is described as a tyrant, but once he was thought to be honest. Macduff himself loved him once ; nor has he suffered anything from Macbeth. In fact Malcolm openly breathes his distrust of Macduff. Macduff may certainly deserve very highly of Macbeth if he can lure Malcolm into Macbeth's clutches. Macduff protests his innocence. Malcolm admits that his own suspicions cannot make him a traitor, if he is honest by nature and disposition. Yet he cannot trust him ; for villainy may wear the mask of grace and innocence. There is further reason why Malcolm distrusts Macduff. He cannot understand that he should have left his wife and children in a place where his own life was not safe. Despite his suspicion, he readily agrees that Macduff may be honest. Macduff again protests his innocence and bewails the fate of his country. Malcolm readily believes the tale of misery, oppression and tyranny, and informs that he has a promise of help from the King of England.

Malcolm draws Macduff's attention to one aspect of the thing. Macbeth is now considered a tyrant, but who knows that he (Malcolm) will not prove a worse tyrant ? Malcolm imputes to himself all the vices under the sun. He says that compared with himself Macbeth will seem to be innocence itself. He professes that his vices are boundless and measureless. If he were to sit on the throne of Scotland, the honour of women of the country would be unsafe, for his lust can have no satiety. Macduff replies that there

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are willing dames enough to be toys of the king's pleasure. Then Malcolm says that he has a worse vice than lust—it is avarice. On coming to the throne of Scotland, he would rob the nobles of their lands and jewellery, and the more he gets, the more will he desire so that he will destroy the good and loyal among his subjects, Macduff will still prefer him to Macbeth, provided he has kingly attributes to be set against these vices. Malcolm denies that he has any kingly attributes to be set against these vices. Malcolm denies that he has any kingly virtues, he has no justice, truth, temperance, constancy, generosity, perseverance, mercy, modesty, devotion, patience, courage, fortitude. At last there comes a cry of despair, from Macduff. He pronounces Malcolm not only unfit to rule as king but also unworthy even to have. He prepares to take leave of Malcolm.

Malcolm is now convinced by Macduff's sincere emotion. In fact he has to be cautious before he trusts anybody, for Macbeth has tried to entrap him many a time. He now retracts all the accusations, which he had lately levelled at himself. He places himself entirely at the disposal of Macduff, and informs him that old Siward, as the head of ten thousand men, is ready to set forth against Scotland. Macduff cannot at once recover from the effect of the startling disclosures that Malcolm had made to him, and keeps silent. Now enters a doctor. The doctor tells of Edward's wonderful power of curing the disease known as the king's evil. Malcolm himself witnessed this. At first Edward prays to God, and then he hangs a gold coin about the neck of the afflicted person, blessed with holy prayers, and he is cured of the disease. It is said that this power is transmitted to his successors. The king has also the gift of prophecy.

At this moment enters Ross. Macduff wants to know the latest news of Scotland. There is nothing new to tell. The oppression and tyranny of Macbeth continue as before. Macduff next inquires about his wife and children. At first Ross gives an evasive answer. Ross reports the rising of many people against Macbeth. He himself saw Macbeth's forces being assembled. If Malcolm would go to Scotland now, there would be no lack of soldiers to fight on his behalf, nay even women themselves would fight for him. Malcolm tells Ross that the king of England has lent him the services of Siward and ten thousand men, with whom he will soon be setting forth for Scotland. Now Roos breaks the news of the murder of Lady Macduff and her children. Macduff blames mainly himself for this tragedy. If he had not been away from Scotland, the blow might not have fallen upon them. He will hardly be comforted by Malcolm's words. His grief is most touching. He curses himself for his own carelessness in leaving them unprotected in Scotland. However, he restrains his grief, and only prays that he may meet Macbeth face to face on the battle field ;

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if he then escapes, may God forgive him too ! Malcolm now proposes that they should take leave of the King of England, for everything is ready for their invasion of Scotland.

Critical Note. It is rather a long, and, in the beginning, a tedious scene. There is justification for Malcolm to be cautious and to test Macduff's sincerity. But the dialogue between the two might have cut short a little. Of course while this dialogue goes on, we are conscious all the time that Macbeth's doom is impending. Macduff's mission to Malcolm costs him his wife and children, and his only comfort is that Macbeth's tyranny will soon be put to an end, and he will have the opportunity of avenging the murder of his wife and children by encountering Macbeth on the battle-field.

There is a diversion when the doctor enters. The praise of Edward's holy touch, by which the disease, known as the king's evil, is cured, is meant to be a compliment to James I. It has nothing to do with the action, or the import of the play.

With the entrance of Ross the scene becomes quite enlivened. Again we are reminded that Macbeth cannot carry on long, and that his doom is drawing near. The wanton murder of Macduff's wife and children during his absence is the final touch to his iniquity. Macduff's grief is quite moving. It is noteworthy that Macduff represses a sentimental outburst, certainly he makes his grief the whetstone of his sword.

"On Shakespeare's ordinary plan of construction, the Fourth Act—the interval between crisis and catastrophe, is the weak spot. He has aggrevated the difficulty in *Macbeth* by making the Crisis far early in Act II. The murder of Banquo carries off the Third Act triumphantly ; the Cavern Scene postpones the difficulty still further ; but now it must be faced. And it is not faced successfully. The earlier part of this scene is of perfunctory paraphrase from Holinshed. Our objection is not to its length or its low tension. A long scene is needed here to give time for the cup of Macbeth's iniquities to be filled and for the counterstroke to gather momentum ; and low tension at this point is a positive merit. Our objection is that the diologue is dull and forced. Malcolm's suspicions are natural, but his devise is almost absurd. Shakespeare in fact, has little interest in the political aspect of Macbeth's crime'. —*Grierson.*

Notes and Explanations

STAGE DIRECTION. **England**—Several days must have elapsed since the last scene, for Ross has had to come from Fife to the English Court. But the impression made is that a much longer period intervenes.

1. **Desolate**—lonely. **Shade**—a shady place.
2. **Weep.....empty**—disburden our hearts of their grief

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in tears. Tears are a relief to pent-up grief. Rather—instead weeping.

3. **Hold.....sword**—take up arms with a grim resolve to fight to the end. **Martal**—death dealing. **Good men**—brave soldiers.

4. **Bestride.....birthdom**—(1) stand up in the defence of our birth-right which Macbeth has outraged by his tyranny ; (2) stand up in defence of our native land, groanining under the tyranny of Macbeth. **Bestride**—stand over, with one leg on each side. The metaphor is that of soldiers bestriding a wounded comrade of theirs. **Down-fall'n**—struck down **Birthdom**—(1) birth-right : (2) the land of our birth.

5. **Howl**—lament their murdered husband. **New orphans cry**—because they have lost their parents.

6. **Strike heaven on the face**—sent forth loud wails which rent the air and beat against the sky. It may also mean : accuse God of failing to avenge the crimes of the usurper. **That**—so that. **Resound**—echoes the cries.

7. **Felt with**—sympathised with. **Yell'd out**—shouted out.

8. **Like syllable of dolour**—a shriek of pain answering to each one uttered from Scotland. **Dolour**—sorrow.

2-8. (*Explanation*). **Let us rather.....dolour**—Macduff appeals to Malcolm to take up arms and to expel the tyrant Macbeth from Scotland. Malcolm proposes that they should retire to a shady spot and give relief to the grief of their hearts in tears. Macduff, on the other hand, suggests that it is no time for shedding unvailing tears. They should rather take up arms, and go to the defence of their native land which lies prostrate under the tyranny of Macbeth. Let them fight like good soldiers and rescue their country. There is no end to Macbeth's tyranny. Every morning men are falling victim to it, and the sky is rent by the wails of windows, by the cries of orphans. Shrieks of ever new grief seem to strike against the sky, and the sky echoes back the cries as if it were in sympathy with Scotland. In other words, the cry of anguish that rises from the survivors is echoed back by the heavens. It is an appeal to God for vengeance upon the crimes of Macbeth.

8. **What I believe, I'll wail**—I shall lament all that I believe to be true. Not that Malcolm is cautious and holds back.

9. **What know' believe**—I shall not believe what I do not know. He means to say that he is not prepared to accept mere rumours or an unverified story like Macduff's. **Redress**—remedy.

10. **As**—according as. **I shall.....find the time to friend**—I shall find the favourable opportunity. **The time to friend**—favourable conditions. **I will**—I wish to redress.

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11. **What you.....perchance**—I do not dispute the truth of what you have described, but I cannot accept your report as conclusive proof. **Spoke**—spoken. **It may be so perchance**—It may be true after all.

12. **Whose sole name blisters our tongues** - whose very name seems to scald our tongues ; whose name to mention is a torture to us.

13. **Once**—before he murdered Duncan. **You.....well**—once you were devoted to him.

14. **He hath.....yet**—he has done no harm to you yet. **Touch'd**—hurt. The reasons why Malcolm regards Macduff as Macbeth's spy are : (1) Macbeth was once of noble disposition ; (2) Macduff then loved Macbeth ; (3) Macbeth has not yet done any wrong to Macduff. (*Stage irony*) **I am young**—the point is that though Malcolm is young he will be a good prize for Macbeth. **Something**—some reward.

15. **Through me**—by betraying me. **And wisdom**—it would be worth while for you.

16-17. **To offer up.....god**—Malcolm compares himself to an innocent lamp, which it will be worth while for Macduff to offer to Macbeth, whom he compares to an angry god. **Offer up**—offer as a sacrifice. **Appease**—propitiate. **To appease an angry god**—of course Malcolm means that it would be to Macduff's own advantage to betray Malcolm to Macbeth. But instead of being direct and blunt, he puts it in a mild inoffensive way.

18. **I am not treacherous**—Macduff is dignified enough to state merely that he is not treacherous. **Macbeth is**—Macbeth is treacherous. Malcolm implies that he cannot trust any body who comes from Macbeth.

19. **Good and virtuous nature**—(1) 'Good nature' such as Macduff claims ; (2) Macbeth was once good and virtuous by nature.

19-20. **Recoil.....charge**—(1) fall from virtue, when executing the king's command ; (2) fall from virtue, when ruling as king. Malcolm implies that Macduff may not be treacherous in normal circumstances, but at Macbeth's bidding, or to avoid his displeasure he may stoop to treachery. If the words apply to Macduff, the meaning is that Macduff is but an agent to Macbeth's ; so 'in an imperial charge' may be explained as carrying out a king's orders. **Crave your pardon**—apologise to you (for suspecting that you might possibly be Macbeth's agent).

21. **That which.....transpose**—whatever I might think of you would not make you other than you are. **That which you are**—your essential character. **Thoughts**—suspicions. **Transpose**—transmute.

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22. **Angles.....fell**—the brightest of angles was Satan, he fell from heaven for his revolt against God. Now because the brightest of angels fell from heaven, one need not generalise that all angles are corrupt. The point is that Satan fell from heaven and lost his brightness as an angel ; yet there are still angels who keep their brightness and goodness. **The brighest**—Satan called Lucifer, the light-bringer. **Fell**—was expelled from heaven on account of his revolt against God.

23. **Foul**—wicked. **Wear.....grace**—put on the mask of virtue.

24. **Yet grace.....so**—a virtuous person must look virtuous though the wicked may put on the appearance of virtue. It appears that Malcolm is anxious not to give any offence to Macduff, and seeks to excuse his suspicion. He would rather keep his mind open, but at the same time he will be very cautious. He implies that when he suspects Macduff, it does not necessarily follow that Macduff is a treacherous agent of Macbeth.

19-24. (*Explanation*). **A good and virtuous nature...look so** – Malcolm shows himself to be quite modest and polite. It is in his own interest that he will have to be very cautious and suspicious. Anybody coming from Macbeth's court is a suspect to him. He frankly tells Macduff that he is unable to trust him ; but apologises to Macduff for entertaining such suspicion. Macbeth himself was once good and virtuous, but his nature has now changed after ascending the throne. Or Malcolm may imply that Macduff may be good and virtuous in normal circumstances of life, but may prove to be dishonest in carrying out a king's order—he is likely to be corrupted by the king. He begs to be excused for his views. He readily makes it clear to Macduff that whatever he may think of him, will not make him other than what he is. He will not rather generalise. It is true that the brightest of the angels, Satan, fell from heaven for his revolt against God : it does not, therefore, follow that all angels are as bad as Satan. In fact wicked persons would sometimes put on the appearance of virtue ; from this it should not be inferred that a virtuous man should not look virtuous.

24. **I have lost my hopes**—Macduff come from Scotland leaving his wife and children in imminent peril of life, to persuade Malcolm to take up arms against Macbeth. Now that Malcolm obstinately refuses to trust him he has little hope of including him.

25. **Perchance even there.....doubts**—you have to give up your hopes perhaps for the very same reason that leads me to doubt your motive. You have to blame yourself for your disappointment. The very fact that you have left your wife and children, so exposed to danger makes me suspicious of your motive.

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26. **In that rawness**—in such thoughtless haste.

27. **Those precious motives**—those objects of tenderest affection. **Those.....love**—those persons to whom one is attached by the strongest ties of affection.

28. **Without leave-taking**—without bidding them farewell. *N.B.* Malcolm is quite shrewd in his own way. The same thought strikes him as it did Lady Macduff If what Macduff describes of the conditions of Scotland be true, how could he have left his wife and children there unprotected ? Naturally, Malcolm regards Macduff with suspicion. The only justification for Macduff is that he could not have anticipated the cruel murder of his wife and children during his absence. There is no hint in Shakespeare that Macduff ran away from Scotland for his own safety, leaving his wife and children to look after themselves. Perhaps Macduff the patriot transcends Macduff the husband and father.

29. **Jealousies**—suspicions. **Let not.....dishonours**—let not my suspicion cast any reflections on you.

30. **But.....safeties**—it is in the interest of my own safety that I must be cautious and suspicious. **You.....just**—you may be after all honest and virtuous, whatever I may think of you. **Rightly just**—strictly honourable.

31. **Bleed.....country**—it is a cry of despair from Macduff. He thinks that there is no hope for his country, and that it must ever groan under the tyranny of Macbeth. Macduff cannot really fight Malcolm's suspicion. He has nothing to say in defence of his conduct in leaving his wife and children unprotected in Scotland.

32. **Great tyranny**—abstract for concrete, and so Macbeth is meant **Lay thou.....sure**—make the foundation of your tyranny as sound and strong as possible.

33. **For**—since. **Goodness.....thee**—the virtuous Malcolm has not the courage to put you down. **Wear.....wrongs**—(1) triumphantly enjoy the kingship you have usurped by crime ; (2) continue in your career of crime.

34. **The title is affeer'd**—your right to be king is now duly certified. **Affeer'd**—established. 'Affeer' meant, (1) to fix the market price of ; then (2) to assess the proper amount of a judicial fine; and in literary sense (3) sanction, confirm. In old English law affeerers were a class of assessors whose duty was to fix the exact sum which should be realised as fine for those offences for which the law did not prescribe any definite fine. They had to consider the circumstance of each offender, and declare on oath what amount they consider just. Shakespeare's father was Affeerer at Stratford. **Lord**—both protest and sneer at Malcolm's refusal to stand up for his rights.

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35-37. **I would not be.....boot**—I would not be a traitor, as you suspect me to be, for all the dominion of Scotland that the usurper holds, with the fabulous wealth of the east thrown in. **The villain**—a traitor who betrayed you to Macbeth. **That thou think'st**—whom as you suspect me to be. **For the whole space.....grasp**—for the kingdom of Scotland which is usurped by Macbeth. **To boot**—in addition.

38. **I speak not.....you**—do not suppose that when I say is due to my absolute mistrust of you.

39. **Sinks.....yoke**—is being daily crushed under the burden of tyranny.

40. **Gash**—would.

41. **Her wounds**—note the change from neuter 'it' to the eminine 'her', which implies the welling of Malcolm's tender affection for his country. **Withal**—besides.

42. **There would be.....right**—Malcolm hints that the King of England will lend him support in fighting for his right. **Hands uplifted**—blows struck ; support given. **In**—in vindication of.

43. **Gracious England**—the pious King of England. **Have I offer**—I have received offer.

44. **Goodly thousands**—an army of a large number of soldiers. **For all this**—in spite of all these advantages which I enjoy.

45. **Tread.....head**—suppress the tyrant Macbeth.

46. **Wear...sword**—carry his head on my sword.

46-47. **Yet my poor country.....before**—even after the suppression of the tyrant Macbeth, my poor country may suffer worse than before—it may be afflicted with still greater evils than it had known during the reign of Macbeth.

48. **More sundry ways**—in more numerous ways.

49. **By him that shall succeed**—at the hands of him who will succeed Macbeth. Malcolm means himself. **What should he be**—Macduff cannot understand how Macbeth's successor will be a worse tyrant than Macbeth himself. He cannot understand whom Malcolm means.

51. **Particulars of vice**—in all its manifold forms. **Grafted**—rooted or ingrained in my character. To graft is to insert a shoot of one tree in the slit of another stalk in order to improve the latter.

52. **They shall be open'd**—they will put forth shoots. **Black Macbeth**—most vicious Macbeth.

53. **As pure as snow**—as stainless and white in his innocence as snow. **Pure**—proleptical use. **State**—country.

54. **Esteem his as a lamb**—now Macbeth is considered as a tyrant, but when he is succeeded by **Malcolm**, who will prove to be

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more vicious than Macbeth. Macbeth will then be considered as harmless and innocent as a lamb. **Lamb**—the type of innocence and meekness.

55. **My confineless harms**—the boundless wrongs inflicted on it by me. **Legions**—a multitude of devils that hell contains.

56. **Damn'd**—accursed.

57. **Top**—surpass. **I grant him bloody**—I admit that Macbeth is blood-thirsty.

58. **Luxurious**—lustful. In the play there is no hint of this vice in Macbeth. **Avaricious**—greedy.

59. **Sudden**—impetuous. **Malicious**—violent. **Smacking of** —partly guilty of.

60. **That has a name**—that is known. **There's no bottom**—there is no end or limit.

61. **Voluptuousness**—licentiousness.

62-63. **Fill up the cistern**—gratify insatiable lust. A cistern is bottomless, and cannot, therefore, be filled ; but is insatiable and so cannot be gratified.

63. **Desire**—lust.

64. **Continent**—restrainings. **Impediments**—obstacles. **O'er-bear**—forcibly bear down.

65-66. **Better Macbeth.....reign**—it is better that Macbeth should reign than that I, the impersonation of so many vices, should succeed him.

60-66. (*Explanation*). **But there's no bottom.....reign**—Malcolm wants to test Macduff before he will trust him. He openly confesses to his suspicion of Macduff's purpose. Macduff then gives up all hopes of any redress from Malcolm. To test Macduff further, Malcolm now begins to disparage himself. He tells Macduff that he may prove a worse tyrant than Macbeth. It is true that Macbeth is blood-thirsty, lustful, greedy, treacherous, impetuous, spiteful—in fact he has something of every vice in the world. But as for himself he says that there is no limit to his licentiousness. He warns Macduff that the wives and daughters in Scotland will not be safe from his lust—they all put together cannot satisfy his desire, which will brook no opposition. In such a circumstance it is better that Macbeth should reign than that he should succeed him.

66-67. **Boundless intemperance.....tyranny**—(1) unrestrained sexual vice is in its very nature a tyranny, because it usurps the functions of will and intelligence alike—here 'intemperance' should be explained as unchastity and 'in nature' as by itself. (2) Habitual and reckless gratification of sensual appetite is a vice that cannot be controlled—here 'intemperance' should be explained as lack of

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control, and 'in nature' as over one's natural cravings. (3) Immoderate licentiousness is an overmastering passion which dominates a man's soul so cruelly as a tyrant governs a country. Plato in his *Republic* compares a man who cannot control his passions to a tyrant who violates law and defies reason.

68. **The happy throne**—the throne occupied by happy kings hitherto.

66-69. (*Explanation*) **Boundless intemperance.....kings**—Malcolm seeks to impress Macduff that the people of Scotland will make a wrong choice by putting him on the throne in place of Macbeth. Malcolm accuses himself of boundless sensual appetite, which the more it is fed, will crave for the more. Macduff replies that debauchery is certainly an undesirable vice in a king. The man who cannot control his animal passions suffers from a tyranny ; his will and intelligence are but subject to his lust. Such licentiousness has brought about the downfall of many kings ; it has often ended in their thing forced to abdicate, or in their meeting with a violent and premature death.

70. **Take upon.....yours**—assume the throne to which you have a legitimate right.

71. **Convey**—indulge by stealth in. **Your pleasures**—satisfaction of your sensual appetite. **Spacious plenty**—abundant supply of wanton women.

72. **Seem cold**—keep us the pretence of being chaste. **The time**—your contemporaries : people in general. **Hoodwink**—fool ; deceive. It is a word taken from falconry. Falcons, while in training, were blinded for a time by means of a hood drawn over their eyes.

73. **Willing dames**—women ready to surrender their virtue.

74. **That vulture in you**—such rapacity in you—'vulture' is used here for ravenous appetite for something revolting, such as vultures have ; then gluttonous, unsatiable lust.

74-75. **Devour.....themselves**—fed up with so many women who will be ready enough to gratify your desire. **Greatness**—a great personage like the king. Abstract for concrete. **Dedicate themselves**—offer their virtue and honour.

76. **Finding it so inclined**—finding that the king desires their body.

77. **Ill-composed**—viciously compounded ; made up of the most sinful desire. A reference to medieval physiology, according to which the character of man was determined by the proportions of the four vital fluids in his body. **Affection**—mental tendency ; natural disposition.

78. **Stanchless**—unquenchable ; insatiable. **Were I king**—if I were king.

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79. **Cut off**—destroy. **For their lands**—for possession of their lands.

80. **His jewels**—one man's jewels.

81. **My more having**—the fact that I was adding to my possessions. **Would be as a sauce**—would serve as an appetizer. **Sauce**—provocative.

82. **Make me hunger more**—make me crave for more. **Forge**—invent.

84. **Quarrels**—cause of quarrel.

84. **Destroying**—murdering.

85. **Sticks deeper**—sends its roots further down. **Pernicious**—injurious.

86. **Summer-seeming lust**—short-lived lust. The metaphor of a plant is kept up in 'summer,' but obscured in seeming. The idea is, lust which resembles a summer plant in lasting only for a season (youth being the summer of life) and in growing out of heat (high temperature in nature corresponding to animal passion in man). Other explanations of summer-seeming are : (1) periodically active just as summer comes at intervals—not a constant stimulus like avarice ; (2) attended with temporary heat of the blood : (3) fit to be indulged in only in summer (seeming' means beseeming or befitting).

87. **Sword**—destruction. **Slain kings**—slain is proleptic. **Do not fear**—do not fear to claim your legitimate throne.

88. **Foisons**—plentiful harvest ; rich resources. **To fill up your will**—to satisfy your avarice.

89. **Of your mere own**—with what belongs wholly to your-self. **Portable**—endurable.

90. **With**—when set against. **Graces**—virtues.

84-90. (*Explanation*). **This avarice.....weigh'd**—Malcolm points out to Macduff that he will prove a much lust, worse king than Macbeth. First, he accuses himself to Macduff meets his point, saying that in Scotland there are enough women willing to part with their virtue. Then Malcolm accuses himself of avarice which will prove most tyrannical to the nobles and the loyal and good subjects in Scotland. Macduff replies that avarice is a more serious vice than lust. Lust is a short-lived passion—it lasts as long as youth, but avarice grows from more to more with increasing years, is deeper-rooted in a man's nature than lust. Avarice has been the cause of the destruction of many kings. Yet Macduff urges Malcolm to take the throne that belongs to him, for Scotland has plenty to satisfy his avarice. He cannot rob others ; he will simply take all that belongs to him. Lastly Macduff adds that these vices—lust and avarice—are endurable when set against virtues

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that a king should possess and he believes that Malcolm possesses kingly virtues, which neutralise his vices.

91. **I have none**—I have no kingly virtues. **The king-becoming graces**—the attributes which are required in and suitable to a king.

92. **Verity**—truthfulness. **Temperance**—self-restraint. **Stableness**—constancy.

93. **Bounty**—generosity. **Lowliness**—meekness.

94. **Devotion**—piety.

95. **No relish of them**—no trace of these virtues.

95-96. **Abound.....crime**—delight in practising every detail and variety of each separate crime. "I am full of resources for the commission of any crime ; if thwarted in one way, I can commit it in many other ways ; if prevented under one name.' I can succeed it under other names, *i. e.*, by calling it something else."—*Percival.* **Division**—a technical term in music meaning variations of the same theme. **Several**—separate.

97. **Acting in many ways**—conning it in a variety of forms, which may diguise its obvious nature. **Had I power**—If I could.

98. **Sweet milk of concord**—peace and harmony are compared here to milk. Compare "milk of human kindness" previously used. Milk is a type of what is pleasant and sweet. **Pour...hell**—banish all peace and harmony from earth. The image of "pouring out sweet milk, as if it was dirty water, down a sink."

99. **Uproar**—disturb ; turn upside down. **Confound**—destroy.

100. **Unity**—union ; the metaphor in 'concord' is continued. **O Scotland**—Macduff bewails the fate of Scotland, when she is groaning under the tyranny of Macbeth, and when Malcolm, the rightful heir to the throne is so unfit to rule in place of Macbeth.

102. **I am as I have spoken**—I am not different from what I have described myself to be. Why does Malcolm thus condemn himself by his own mouth ? Obviously to test Macduff. But Chambers asks, "Is it not true that in the critical moments of life one is often suddenly oppressed with a sense of one's own weaknesses, and dormant if not actual tendencies to evil, which seem to cry loud for expression, confession ? Gervinus says, "In the embitterred and suspicious state of mind of the orphaned, oft-tempted, and betrayed young man, it is not inconsistent that he should go so far in his dissimulation towards the very man whom he would most gladly trust."

103. **Not to live**—he is not even fit to live.

104. **Untitled**—usurping. **Bloody-scepter'd**—(1) exercising the power of a king by bloodshed ; (2) scepter reeking with blood.

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105. **Wholesome**—healthy ; happy.

106. **Truest.....throne**—direct heir of your rightful soverign and most legitimate claimant to your throne.

107. **Interdiction**—sentence of self-exclusion. *N. B.* In the Roman Catholic Church, an interdiction is an authoritative and peremptory prohibition debarring a person or place from ecclesiastical functions. Formerly the Pope also issued interdicts against kings who disobeyed him and were on that account deposed. **Accursed**—under a ban.

108. **Blaspheme**—slander. **His breed**—his noble family.

109. **Sainted**—saintly during life ; living the life of a saint.

110. **Upon her knees**—kneeling in prayer.

111. **Died.....lived**—lived a life of daily self-renunciation. **Died**—in the sense of mortifying earthly desires and passions. **Lived**—lived in the spirit. Compare :

"I held it truth with him who signs
To one clear harp in diverse tones
That man may rise on stepping tones
Of their dead selves to higher things,"

112. **These evils.....thyself**—the vices with which you charge yourself.

114. **Thy hope ends here**—the hope of releasing Scotland from the tyranny of Macbeth which Macduff founded upon Malcolm, now perishes. His own heart nursed this hope and now in his heart dies the hope. **This noble passion**—this sincere emotion.

115. **Child of integrity**—which springs from and be-speaks your honesty.

116. **Wiped**—erased. **Black scruples**—suspicion and treachery.

116-17. **Reconciled.....honour**—persuaded me to believe that you are a man of honour and sincerity.

118. **Trains**—artifices. In hunting, the term was used for a bait trailed along the ground to entice an animal ; in hawking for a lure to reclaim a rambling hawk.

118-19. **Win me into his power**—get hold of me. **Modest wisdom**—ordinary prudence.

119-20. **Plucks.....haste**—warns me against the rashness of being too ready to delieve.

121. **Deal.....me**—judge between us two, if ever we distrust each other, and punish us for doing so.

122. **To thy direction**—under your guidance.

123. **Unspeak**—retract. **Mine own detraction**—the charges that I have laid against myself. **Abjure**—renounce.

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124. **Taints and blames**—the vices. **Laid upon myself**—accused myself of.

125. **For.....nature**—as being alien to me. **Nature**- natural deposition.

126. **Unknown to woman**—having nothing to do with the woman. **Was forsworn**—perjured myself.

127. **Coveted**—longed for.

128. **Broke my faith**—proved false to my promise.

129. **The Devil to his fellow**—the vilest of sinners to one equally vile.

129-130. **Delight.....life**—love truth as dearly as life itself—would rather die then utter a lie. **My first false speaking**—the first lie I have told in my life.

131. **Upon myself**—against myself. **What I am truly**—all that I am worth.

132. **Is thine.....command**—is placed at your service and at the service of my country, which is groaning under the tyranny of Macbeth.

133. **Here-aparoach**—arrival here.

134. **War-likemen**—soldiers.

135. **At a point**—fully equipped.

136. **We'll together**—we will go together.

136-137. **The chance of goodness.....quarrel**—(1) may the prospect of our success be as certain as our cause is righteous: may good fortune attend our just cause. (2) May the chance of goodness be as assured as the grounds of our quarrel—though success depends on chance, let us hope that it will come to those who are righteous.

138-39. **Such welcome.....reconcile** - you seem to blow hot and cold in the same breath—a moment ago you imputed to yourself the worst vices, and now you say that you are innocent of these vices, I do not know where the truth lies.

140. **More anone**—we shall talk further on this. **Comes the king forth**—this episode is a courtly compliment to James I. The practice of getting scrofulous patients touched by the soverign in the hope that they would be cured, dates back to the reign of Edward the Confessor. He was the first to practise it; and the healing benediction' being considered hereditary in English sovereigns, the practice was kept up till the days of Queen Anne who touched Dr. Johnson in 1712. James I was at first reluctant to continue the practice, as his Scottish advisers considered it superstitious; but later on he agreed to do as a concession to English sentiment, but only by way of prayer. This adds piquancy to this compliment, paid to him on the English stage. Dramatically,

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the episode gives Malcolm time to make up his mind what he should do.

141. **Crew of wretched souls**—a large crowd of afflicted persons.

142. **Stay his cure**—wait to be touched by the King. **Their malady**—their disease. **Convinces**—defies.

143. **The great.....art**—the utmost efforts of expert physicians. **Assay**—effort. Now used of testing metal.

144. **Such sanctity.....hand**—God has bestowed such grace upon him. The power of healing the scrofulous patients by mere touch has been granted to him by God. **Sanctity**—holiness.

145. **Presently**—at once. **Amend**—recover from the disease.

146. **The evil**—known as the king's evil, *i. e.*, scrofula. Scrofula is tuberculosis of the lymphatic glands ; purulent abcesses from over the affected parts, and degeneration of the structures sets in soon after inflamation.

147. **Miraculous work**—curing by mere touch.

148. **Here-remain**—stay at the English court.

149. **Solicits heaven**—prays to God, or solicits the aid of God.

150. **Strangely-visited**—afflicted by scrofula.

151. **All swoln and ulcerous**—they have abcesses over the affected parts. **Pitiful to the eye**—a ghastly sight.

152. **The mere despair of surgery**—who cannot be cured by any surgeon.

153. **A golden stamp**—a gold coin. *N. B.* This is an anachronism. The practice of presenting each touched person with a gold or silver coin, called the touch-piece, was introduced by Edward in 1272. Ordinarily the touch-piece was an angel, an obsolete gold coin worth 6*s.* 8*d.* to 10*s.* : but Charles II ordered a special metal to be minted for the purpose

154. **Put.....prayers**—what Edward the Confessor did, as recorded in Stow's *Annals* was to dip his hand in a bowl of water and touch the affected parts over and over again, now and then forming with tip of his finger the mark of a cross. Afterwards a special form of prayer was used. This prayer was originally printed on a separate sheet, but was inserted in the Book of Common Prayer in 1684, where it remained till 1719.

155. **The succeeding royalty**—the successor on the throne. **Leaves**—transmits.

156. **The healing benediction**—the gift of healing patients by invoking God's blessings on them.

149-56. (*Explanation*). **How he solicits heaven.....benediction**—Here Malcolm describes the process of healing scrofulous

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patients, as practised by Edward the Confessor. These patients are covered over with festering sores—a pitful, ghastly sight. They have been given up as hopeless by surgeon. But the King cures them by means of prayers. He knows best how he solicits the aid of God. All that he does is to hang a gold coin round the neck of the patient with holy prayers. It is said that he transmits this gift of curing to his successor.

156. **With**—along with. **Strange virtue**—miraculous power.

167. **Heavenly**—bestowed by God.

158. **Sundry**—numerous. **Hang.....throne**—attend on him.

159. **Speak him**– proclaim him. **Full of grace**—enjoying the blessings of God.

160. **My countryman**—Malcolm recognises Ross to be his countryman by the latter's Highland costume ; but does not know who he is. This conveys to us the impression that Malcolm has been long absent from Scotland.

162. **Betimes**– early.

162-163. **Remove.....strangers**—put an end to the cause that keeps us unknown to each other. **Amen**—May God will it.

164. **Stands.. ...did**—is there any difference in the state of things in Scotland, or does it continue the same ?

163. **Almost.....itself**—too much distracted by sorrows and affections.

165-66. **It cannot.....grave**—Scotland cannot be called our mother because instead of nourishing us as a mother does, it is bringing us to early graves. Of course Macbeth's tyranny is the cause of the destruction of the inhabitants of Scotland ; since people are perishing there day by day, Scotland cannot be said to be their mother. **Nothing**—no human-being.

167. **But who knows nothing**—except one who is wholly ignorant of what is taking place around him.

169. **Are made, not mark'd**—have become so common that they are not noticed at all. **Made**—caused to be uttered.

170. **Modern ecstasy**—commonplace fit of sorrow.

170-71. **The dead man's knell.....for who**—nobody asks for whom the death-knell is tolled. Death has become so common there that nobody seems to be interested in the reason who is dead and who is knelled to grave.

172. **Expire**—(1) are cut short ; (2) fade away. **Flowers in their caps**—Scots wear springs of feather on their bonnets.

173. **Dying**—being murdered. **Ere**—before.

165-73. (*Explanation*). **It cannot.....sicken**—Ross is describing state of things in Scotland to Malcolm. He cannot now call Scotland his mother. People there are perishing day by day instead

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of being nourished and kept alive. Scotland has now turned into a graveyard. None is seen there to smile except one who is ignorant of the state of things. Sights, grons and shrieks rise from the people and fill the air ; they have become so common that they are not noticed by anybody. A violent outburst of sorrow is regarded there as quite normal. Death has become so common that when the funeral-bell rings, nobody ever asks who is dead. The lives of innocent and honest men wither away earlier than flowers which they wear in their caps. They seem to die before they get sick. In fact the murder of innocent and honest men is too frequent there. In Scotland people are living in a state of suspense and dread.

173. **Relation**—narrative.

174. **Nice**—(1) detailed ; elaborated : (2) set forth in fastidious language. **Newest**—latest. **Grief**—cause of grief. An instance of dramatic irony because Macduff does not know that the newest grief relates to himself.

175. **That.....speaker**— calamity that happened an hour ago would become stale and antiquated, when related by the speaker. The metaphor is from the stage—the idea being that if one were to narrate the calamity which took place an hour ago, one would be hissed at for being behind the times, because so many are being murdered within an hour.

176. **Teems**—gives birth to. **A new one**—a new cause of grief.

177. **Well**—Ross takes refuge in a quibble . By saying that Macduff's wife is well, he means that she is at peace in the grave. Compare, "We used to say the dead are well."—*Antony and Cleopatra.*

178. **The tyrant.....peace**—Macduff could not imagine that Macbeth could spite himself upon his wife and children, when he failed to get hold of Macduff. He believes, therefore, that his wife and children must have been left alone by Macbeth. **Batter'd at**—tried to break in upon.

179. **They were.....leave 'em**—Ross is so far true that there was nothing wrong with Macduff's wife and children when Ross parted from them.

180. **Be not.....speech**—do not mince words. **How goes't**—(1) what news of the family . (2) How is the revolution going on ?

181. **Transport** carry across. **Tidings**—news.

182. **Heavily**—sorrowfully.

183. **Worthy fellows**—estimable persons. **That were out**—who had broken into rebellion. *N. B.* Those who joined the Jacobite rising of 1745, were frequently referred to as having been out in 1745.

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184. **Was.....witness'd**—was confirmed in my judgment.

185. **For that**—because. **Power**—armed forces. **A-foot**—in motion.

186. **Time of help**—the ripe of time of helping England. **Your eye**—a more glance from you.

187. **Create soldiers**—bring forth soldiers.

188. **Doff**—get rid of. **Dire Distresses**—dreadful affliction. **Be 't their comfort**—let them have this assurance.

189. **Gracious England**—the gracious King of England.

191-92. **An older.....out**—there is none whom Christendom declares to be an older and better soldier. **Christendom**—the Christian world. **Gives out**—report. **Would**—I wish.

192-93. **Answer.....like**—match this with an equally comforting news.

194. **Would**—should. **Howl'd out**—painfully shouted out. **In the desert air**—in a dreary, lonely place.

895. **Hearing.....them**—no human ear should catch them. **Latch**—catch. **What concern they**—to what subject are they related ?

196. **The general cause**—the cause of the nation as a whole. **Fee-grief**—a sorrow belonging to one man. A law metaphor—a fee is a heritable estate in land held from a feudal superior or the right to such estate ; to hold in fee is to have the highest right in land which English law recognises, and hence equivalent to own absolutely. The two ideas in fee-grief are : (1) boundless grief as much as any single breast might hold ; individual incidence as opposed to common participation in a national calamity.

197. **Due to**—owned by. **Some single breast**—the breast of some single individual. **No mind that's honest**—there is no mind of honourable disposition.

198. **But in.....woe**—who has no share in that fee-grief.

199. **Pertains to you**—belongs to you.

201. **Despise.....ever**—hate me always for having broken the news to you.

202. **Possess**—acquaint. **Heaviest**—saddest.

203. **I guess at it**—now the truth dawns on Macduff. But when leaving for England he could imagine that Macbeth would take his vengeance upon his wife and children.

204. **Surprised**—taken by storm.

205. **Manner**—the manner of the slaughter.

206. **Were**—would be. **Quarry**—heap of deer killed in a day's hunt. **Murder'd deer**—Macduff's wife and children who had been murdered by Macbeth are compared to deer. There may be a quibble on 'deer' and 'dear ones'.

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207. **Add.....you**—kill you and add your dead body. Ross means to say that if he were to describe the manners of the slaughter of his wife and children, he (Macduff) would not survive it.

208. **Ne'er.....brows**—Macduff pulls down his hat upon his face to hide his tears.

209. **Give sorrow words**—give vent to your sorrow in words. **The grief.....speak**—the grief which is suppressed.

210. **Whispers.....break**—presses upon the burdened heart and afflicts it.

208-10. (*Exaplanation*). **What ! man.....break**—Ross at last breaks the sad news to Macduff. His wife and children have been murdered by Macbeth. Macduff draws his hat down upon his face to hide his tears. Malcolm now turns to Macduff, and begs him not to suppress his grief but to utter it in words. The utterance of his grief will relieve his heart. If it is suppressed, it will only crush his heart.

211. **My children too**—the tremendous emotion of Macduff's repeated inquiry is one of the most living things in the play. The calamity is so great that he is unable to take in its whole range at once."—*Scrimgeour.*

212. **Must be from thence**—and this had taken place when I had to be away.

214-215. **Let's make us.....grief**—let not this grief fritter away, but be turned into a motive of revenge. The grief is described as a deadly disease ; the revenge which they are going to have upon Macbeth is to be the medicine that will cure this grief.

216. **He has no children**—the exact force of this passage depends on who 'he' is : (1) If he is Malcolm, Macduff turns to Ross, but replies to the words of comfort attempted by Malcolm. The sense is ; not being a father he knows not the depth of a bereaved father's grief ; otherwise he would not talk to me of comfort or revenge, or curing or the grief at a time when I am so overwhelmed. (2) If he is Macbeth, the words may be explained in two different ways : (a) If the words refer to great revenge, the sense is : no revenge can be adequate because there can be no retaliation in kind ; Macbeth, not having children whom I may murder, cannot be made to feel the pain he has given me (this thought would be unworthy of Macduff). (b) If the words are soliloquy, the sense is : not having children, Macbeth is a stranger to parental love, and that is why he could bring himself to order the slaughter of children.

217. **Hell-kite**—a person of hellish cruelty.

218-19. **All my pretty chickens.....swoop**—in these homely words of endearment Macduff's tenderness gushes forth. **At one fell swoop**—at one fierce blow.

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220. **Dispute it**—risist your grief. **Like a man**—with manly fortitude.

221. **Feel it as a man**—experience it and measure its depth and intensity as a man should do or as a man who loves his wife and children.

222-23. **I cannot but remember.....me**—this is the most poignant utterance of Macduff's grief. Now his wife and children are no more ; they have been cruelly murdered. But he cannot forget that once they were living, and were such a delight to his heart. The contrast between 'what was,' and 'is not', bears down Macduff. **Did heaven look on**—how could God be a silent witness to this cruel and wanton murder of innocent children ? *N. B.* This is the most human touch in Macduff's grief. It is in honour of affliction that the injustice in the scheme of things, over which God is believed to rule, is borne home to us. Man now questions the providence of God.

224. **Would not take their part**—did not save them from their murderers. **Sinful Macduff**—now Macduff begins to blame himself for his absence.

225. **Struck for thee**—killed for your own fault—because your left them unprotected. **Naught**—a worthless wretch.

226. **Demerits**—sins.

227. **Fell.....souls**—were they murdered. **Heaven.....now**—may heaven give them peace and rest. At this point Macduff turns his thought to his country, and to the take of.

228. **Be this.....sword**—let this foul outrage sharpen you desire to kill Macbeth in battle.

229. **Convert to anger**—be transformed into anger. **Blunt not.....it**—let not your sensibilities be dulled, but be kindled into fury by grief.

230. **Play the woman with mine eyes**—shed tears like a woman.

231. **Braggart**—bluster. **With my tongue**—in my speech.

232. **Cut short all intermission**—reduce all delay. **Front to front**—foce to face.

233. **This fiend of Scotland**—this pitiless tyrant of Scotland.

234. **Set**—place. **'Scape**—escape.

235. **Heaven forgive him too**—if I let him escape, may God forgive him. The idea is : I am so determined to slay him that if he can evade my vengeance after coming within reach of my sword, he would deserve to be pardoned by God. He feels that it was for his fault that his wife and children were murdered. He decides that it is for him to revenge the murder with his own arm ; failing that, he would not consign Macbeth to eternal perdition. This

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tune goes manly—your words have a noble manly ring about them.

236. **Go we to the king**—let us go to the king. **Power**—army.

237. **Our lack.....leave**—all that we need is to take leave of the king.

238. **Is ripe for shaking**—is ready to fail. Just as a ripe fruit falls when the tree is shaken, so Macbeth's tyranny has reached a point when an invasion from there will at once depose him. **Powers above**—heavenly powers.

239. **Put on their instruments**—set to work their agents or ministers of vengeance. **Cheer**—cheerfulness.

240. **The night.....day**—no night can be so long that it will not end.

ACT V : SCENE I

Analysis. Lately Lady Macbeth has been troubled in her sleep. She has been walking in sleep. The doctor has watched her with a waiting-gentlewoman for two nights. Till now the Doctor has not seen anything to confirm the waiting-woman's report. The Doctor wants to know whether the waiting-woman has heard her say anything while she walks in sleep. But she refuses to tell him what she has heard Lady Macbeth say since there is no witness to confirm it.

At this point Lady Macbeth enters with a taper. Her eyes are open, but she cannot see. The Doctor notices that she kept rubbing her hands. The waiting-woman tells him that it is a customary action with her to seem to be washing her hands, she will continue doing it for a quarter of an hour. Then Lady Macbeth begins to cry—"Our, damned spot, I say !" She seems to be reproaching her husband for his cowardice and to allude to the old man (Duncan) who has so much blood in him. Then she begins to speak of Macduff's wife, and at the next moment looks at her hands, and exclaims impatiently whether they would ever be clean. The Doctor now begins to suspect the truth. Lady Macbeth cries again that her hands smell of the blood-stain which cannot be removed by all the perfume of Arabia. Then a heavy sigh breaks forth from her heart. The Doctor says that it is a disease not to be cured by his art. Lady Macbeth seems to be again admonishing her husband—"Wash your hands, put on your nightgown : look not so pale." Then she speaks of Banquo being buried, and therefore unable to come out of his grave. She also refers to the knocking at the gate.

The Doctor has heard of whisphered rumours of murder, which seems to be confined by Lady Macbeth's involuntary words. He tells the waiting-woman that Lady Macbeth needs the services of a priest rather than of a physician. He bids her keep watch on Lady Macbeth lest she may attempt suicide.

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Critical Note. We have not seen Lady Macbeth since the night of coronation banquet. Preseted as she is now in her sleep-walking scene, we can imagine what she has gone through in the meantime. Lady Macbeth's nerve and sensibility at last give way under the strain. How she wished to unsex herself when planning the murder of Duncan ! But Lady Macbeth keeps a woman till the end, and for a woman the burden of guilt and remorse has been too much to bear. In her sleep, which is hardly a sleep, her guilty thoughts surge up into her consciousness, and involuntarily she acts over again the old crimes. It means that the memories of the past will never give any peace to her soul. While she sleeps in body, her soul is kept awake by these agonising memories. Her sleep-walking is nothing but a resurgence of these memories of crimes into full consciousness.

"The scene is sufficient without any addition of narration to suggest all that has happened in the interval, the deadly force with which her deed has recoiled on the woman's nature. What has driven her husband to deeds of insensate fury has silently sapped her peace of mind and with it her life. There is no hint of this scene in Shakespeare's sources. It is a stroke of creative imagination. For the first and last time in literature sleep-walking is used with great and terrible dramatic effect. The thread which runs through all, Lady Macbeth says, is the memory of the past deed, from which all savour of passionate purpose has departed, leaving only horror and anguish."—*Grierson.*

Notes and Explanations

STAGE DIRECTION. The scene takes place several days after the last. **Doctor of Physic**—a physician. **Physic**—the science and art of healing. **Waiting-Gentle-woman**—Lady in waiting ; lady of the bed-chamber.

1. **Watched**—sat up. The doctor has been informed by the waiting-gentlewoman of Lady Macbeth's sleep-walking. The doctor had, therefore, watched the patient.

2. **Perceive..... ...report**—find nothing that will confirm your statement about the condition of the patient. **Walked**—walked in her sleep.

3. **Went.....field**—was out with the army. *N.B.* There is a hint above that Macbeth, at the head of an army, was preparing to march against the Scots rebels. But he found that few of his nobles were on his side, and fell back on Dunsinane, and when the English force drew near, relied on the predictions of the witches that he would be able to rout the enemy. The words of Lady Macbeth's waiting-gentlewoman indicate that Macbeth's absence and Lady Macbeth's inability to communicate with him were the immediate cause of her strange disease. Dr. Buknill doubts whether deep melancholy or remorse often tends to exhibit itself in somnam-

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bulism." But there can be no doubt that the scene is a stroke of dramatic genius.

4. **Nightgown**—dressing-gown.

5. **Closet**—cabinet for private papers and valuables. **Write**—she may be supposed to write to Macbeth, warning him against some peril, or to commit her own guilty thoughts on paper to relieve her remorse.

6-7. **All this while...sleep**—*i.e.*, all the time she was writing, she was fast asleep.

8. **Perturbation in nature**—disturbance in the human system. **At once**—simultaneously.

8-9. **To receive.....watching**—to enjoy the blessing of sleep and at the same time to act as if she is awake. **Effects**—actions ; outward signs. **Watching**—keeping awake.

10. **Slumbery agitation**—physical activity during sleep. **Slumbery**—taking place during sleep. **Actual performances**—acts.

12. **After her**—in exact words of hero.

13. **You may**—it is permissive for you to repeat her exact words to me, her physician. **Meet**—proper.

15. **Confirm my speech**—corroborate my statement. She is afraid of being charged with high treason for slandering the king and queen.

STAGE DIRECTION. **Enter Lady Macbeth, with a taper**—Mrs. Siddons thus describes her : "Behold her now, with wasted form, with wan and haggard countenance : her starry eyes glazed, with the ever-burning fever of remorse, and on their lids the shadows of death. Her ever restless spirit wanders in trouble dreams about her dismal apartment ; but whether sleeping or walking the 'smell' of innocent blood incessantly haunts her imagination.

16. **Guise**—manner. **Upon my life**—I swear.

17. **Stand close**—keep out of her sight. **Close**—hidden ; in concealment.

18. **How came she by**—where did she get ?

20. **'Tis her command**—she bade me place a light by her bedside. She cannot face darknees, though at one time she invoked it.—(I. v. 48-52).

21. **Eyes are open**—a somnambulist "sees, as it were, with the outstretched finger tips—for the most part this is the rule—while the open, sightless eyes stare continually into vacancy" —*Pfeil.*

22. **Their sense is shut**—she does not see with them. "The plural might be used as designating a property common to the two eyes."—*Clarke and Wright.*

25. **Accustomed**--customary.

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25-26. **Seem.....hands**—act as if she were actually washing her hands.

26. **In this**—in this act.

28. **Yet**—even after so much washing. **Spot**—spot of blood. How pathetic when we recall her remark—"A little water clears us of this deed !—(II. ii. 66). She actually echoes Macbeth's sentiments in Act II. scene ii, lines 59-60.

29. **Set down**—put in writing. **Comes from her**—is uttered by her lips.

30. **Satisfy.....strongly**—make sure that my memory does not play me false.

31. **Out**—be off. **Damned**—accursed. **One, two**—Lady Macbeth's thoughts are wandering. Her memory goes back to the signal of the bell that she rang to let her husband know that it was time to commit the murder of Duncan.

32. **Do't**—murder Duncan. In fact Lady Macbeth re-enacts the murder scene. **Hell is murky**—Lady Macbeth shudders to think of the darkness of hell. The darkness of hell is within her soul now. Stevens puts the words within inverted commas to indicate that Lady Macbeth merely repeats in contempt what her husband said. But we ought to remember Macbeth's own assertion that he was prepared to 'jump the life to come' if he could escape the earthly punishment of his crime. **Murky**—dismally dark.

33. **Need we fear**—a reference, perhaps, to Act III, scene i, lines 54-55.

34. **Call.....account**—demand an explanation for our conduct, because we are sovereigns, and therefore, above law. **Our power**—the reference is to the doctrine that "the king can do no wrong," which is derived from the so-called divine right of kings and which exempts the king from appearing in any proceeding in a court justice.

35. **Old man**—Duncan. **So much blood**—reference to Act II. scene ii, line 54 and Act II, scene iii, line 88.

36. **Mark that**—understand the implication of the Queen's words.

37. **Thane of Fife**—Macduff. **Had a wife**—"as a woman she feels for a murdered woman." —*Wilson*. Lady Macbeth's troubled and tormented conscience involves her in responsibility for all the crimes of her husband—even those committed without her knowledge.

38. **Ne'er be clean**—her disjointed thoughts return to the night of Duncan's murder. Compare Act II, scene ii, lines 46, 59, 63 and 66.

39. **No more o' that**—think no more of the dreaded phantom your imagination conjures up. A reference to Macbeth's horror on

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seeing Banquo's ghost (Act III, scene iv, lines 50-51). **Mar all**—spoil the mirth of festivity. **Starting**—fits of alarm.

40. **Go to**—an expression of disapproval. The Doctor does not like that Lady Macbeth should thus reveal the crimes in her sleep-walking scene. **You have.....not**—these things should not have come to your knowledge.

42. **She has spoke.....not**—the waiting-gentle-woman means that she was an unwilling party to Lady Macbeth's confessions ; in any case Lady Macbeth should not have thus given herself away.

43. **What she has known**—(1) what she has gone through—the pangs of remorse (2) the experience of crimes which she rave's about in her sleep-walking scene.

44, **Smell**—the colour of the blood frightens Macbeth, the smell of the blood frightens Lady Macbeth.

45. **Perfumes of Arabia**—"How appropriately either sex illustrates the same idea."—*Mrs. Siddons.* Frankincense and spices were imported from Arabia ; hence it was considered the land of perfumes. **Sweeten**—expel the smell of blood from. **This little hand**—from this it has been inferred that Lady Macbeth was of short stature. But there is meant to be an antithesis between "all the perfumes of Arabia" and "this little hand."

45-46. **Oh. oh, oh,**—"an interminable sigh of weariness and despair."—*Darmesteter.*

47. **What.....there**—it is a sigh that desolates the hear. **Sorely**—heavily.

48. **Charged**—burdened with sorrow and despair.

49. **For**—for the sake of.

50. **Dignity.....body** reverence paid to her as queen.

49-50. **I would not.....body**—I would not be a queen with a heart as heavily laden as Lady Macbeth's. She implies that a queen with a heart so sorely charged is the most unhappy creature on earth.

51. **Well, well, well**—who would have thought so ? the Doctor's exclamation is rather ambiguous. He now fully comprehends the nature of Lady Macbeth's trouble, but he can hardly recover from the shock.

52. **It be**—that it be well with her (Lady Macbeth).

53. **This disease.....practice**—it is a disease, not to be cured by me. Till the second half of the eighteenth century little attention was paid to mental diseases in England. Lunatics were whipped and confined in a dark room.

54. **Which**—who.

54-55. **Died holily in their beds**—died in peace in their beds *i. e.*, they were not criminals and therefore not executed. The

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Doctor implies that Lady Macbeth's disease is something more than mere sleep-walking. **Holily**—*i. e.*, peacefully and after receiving the last rites of religion.

59. **Wash your hands**—Lady Macbeth is re-enacting the scene of Duncan's murder. Compare Act II, scene ii, line 46. **Nightgown**—compare Act II, scene ii, line 69.

57. **Buried**—compare Act III, scene iv, line 70.

58. **On's**—of his.

59. **Even so**—so it is now Banquo's murder—another crime still. The meaning of Lady Macbeth's previous words—"you mar all with this starting"—is now clear to the Doctor. The whole truth now begins to dawn on the Doctor.

60. **To bed**—compare Act II, scene ii. **Knocking**—compare Act II, scene ii. line 64.

61-62. **What's done.....undone**—compare Act III, scene ii, line 12.

64. **Directly**—at once.

65. **Foul whisperings**—muttered suspicions of crimes. **Abroad**—being circulated. **Unnatural**—loathsome (criminal).

66. **Unnatural**—abnormal. **Troubles**—mental diseases. **Infected minds**—minds tormented by a consciousness of guilt.

67. **Deaf**—uncomprehending **Discharge their secrets**—confess their secret crimes.

68. **More needs.....physician**—her case is one not to be taken by a physician but by a priest who can give her conscience, peace and suggest a spiritual remedy.

65-68. (*Explanation*). **Foul whisperings.....physician**—This is the comment, made by the Doctor on Lady Macbeth's mental trouble. From her involuntary cries and expressions in her sleep-walking, it is clear to the Doctor that she has been involved in the crimes of her husband. So her trouble is the trouble of an outraged conscience—of memories of crimes perpetually haunting and tormenting her. Such abnormal mental troubles can be due to remorse for crimes, which perpetually afflicts the soul only, and so a confession of crimes is involuntarily made in sleep as in this case. Lady Macbeth, therefore, needs the services of a priest, and not of a physician.

69. **Look after her**—carefully attend to her.

70. **Means of all annoyance**—*i.e.*, means of self-destruction. Annoyance—bodily harm. The Doctor fears that Lady Macbeth may attempt suicide—a foreshadowing of what is to happen.

71. **Still**—always. **Keep eyes upon her**—never lose sight of her (lest she may attempt suicide).

72. **Mated**—confounded. **Amazed**—astounded.

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73. **I think.....speak**—it is all clear to me now—I know the secret of her anguish but I cannot breathe it to any body. "They both now know of her complicity, hitherto a secret, in her husband's crime and both seem to mean to keep their knowledge to themselves (through fear of their own safety, if they speak it out."

—*Percival.*

ACT V : SCENE II

Analysis. Some of the rebel nobles assemble, waiting to join Malcolm and the English army he is leading. Angus proposes that they should meet near Birnam wood, for Malcolm and his English allies are coming that way. Donalbain is not with them. There are Siward's son and many unbearded youths in the army, coming to invade Scotland.

In the meantime Macbeth is fortifying Dunsinane. Some say that he is mad ; others, that he is displaying the most reckless courage. In any case he will not be able to keep his army in discipline. Angus says that Macbeth is now being punished for his breach of faith by the revolt of his nobles, occurring every minute, that those who follow him, do so in fear and not in love. They now prepare to march on and give obedience where it is due.

Critical Notes. It is a scene revealing the internal condition of Scotland—the reaction that began early, and has now come to a head. Some of the nobles are in open revolt. They are waiting to join the English army under Malcolm, Siward and Macduff coming to invade Scotland. Macbeth seems to have realised his desperate poison. He will stand a siege rather than meet his enemy in the open. Lady Macbeth drops out of the picture.

Notes and Explanations.

1. **Power**—forces ; army.

2. **Uncle Siward**—it must be "Old Siward'. According to Holinshed, Siward was maternal grandfather of Malcolm. **Good**—brave.

3. **Revenges**—plural because each has his own revenge to take. **Burn in them**—kindle their hearts with indignation. **Dear causes**—heartfelt grievance, causes which are so dear to their hearts.

4-5. **Would...man**—would summon and call into life again a dead man to fight the grim battle against Macbeth. **Bleeding and the grim alarm**—deadly and bloody battle. *N. B.* 'In bleeding' there may be an allusion to the superstition that the corpse of a murdered man bled afresh in the presence of his murderer. **Mortified man**—(1) one who has completely subdued his passions, and is therefore, indifferent to worldly wrongs—so summon the virtuest ascetic to the deadly and bloody battle. (2) One who has completely given way to despair. (3) benumbed manhood. Liddell explains, "Revenges burn in them : I say burn, because they suffer from a

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fever which needs to be bled, and war's stern alarm must furnish the furious incitement to rouse from its lethargy their lifeless manhood, so long crushed under the heel of a tyrant." (4) Would rouse even the corpse of a murdered man to bleed afresh and exhibit its alarm in dreadful fashion—an explanation, offered by Deighton in view of the superstition, referred to above.

6. **Well**—suitably.

8. **For certain**—beyond doubt. **File**—list.

9. **Gentry**—nobility.

10. **Unrough**—unbearded. **Even now**—at the present moment.

11. **Protest.....manhood**—proclaim that they have just arrived at man's stature.

13. **Lesser**—in a lesser degree.

14. **Valiant fury**—desperate courage.

15-16. **He cannot.....rule**—he cannot enforce discipline on disorganised followers. **Buckle**—fasten with a buckle ; hence, keep under control. **Distemper'd**—diseased. **Cause**—(1) party, followers ; (2) affairs generally. **Belt of rule**—(1) discipline ; (2) guidance ; direction.

17. **Secret**—secretly committed. **Sticking on his hands**—ascribed to him. The idea is : As is the blood stuck to his wife's hands, and could not be washed, so he could not get rid of his guilt of murder.

18. **Minutely**—occuring every minute. **Revolts**—the revolt of his nobles. **Upbraid**—condemn. **Faith-breach**—breach of faith to the King (Duncan). Macbeth broke his faith to Duncan, and murdered him and now his crime recoils on him, for his thanes have broken faith with him and are in revolt against him.

19. **Move only in command**—act merely to obey orders (*i. e.*, under compulsion, and not out of devotion to Macbeth).

20. **Nothing**—not at all. **Title**—title of king.

21. **Hang.....him**—slip off from him.

22. **Dwarfish**—of a diminutive size.

16-22. (*Explanation*). **Now does he feel.....thief**—This is the remark, made by Angus, about Macbeth. The murders that he had secretly committed, now haunt his memory and conscience. He cannot get rid of his sense of guilt. He broke faith with Duncan, and murdered him. His thanes are now deserting him, and are in revolt against him. Those who obey his commands, do so under compulsion, and not out of loyalty to him. It is but forced obedience that they yield him. Now Macbeth feels that the title of king he has usurped, is slipping off from him as a giant's robe slips off from a thief of diminutive stature, who has stolen and put it on.

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22. **Who then shall blame**—no one can blame.

23. **Pester'd**—constantly troubled. **To recoil**—if they recoil. **Recoil**—flinch. **Start**—be seized with alarm.

24-25. **When all...there**—"when all the faculties of the mind are employed in self-condemnation.'—*Johnson*. Rene Roumic says that Macbeth, the criminal, retains the conscience of an upright man. **All.....him**—his very self or identity.

26. **Where't is truly owed**—to Malcolm, to whom our loyalty and obedience are due.

27. **Meet we**—let us meet. **Medicine**—doctor ; physician. **Sickly weal**—the state which is diseased. Malcolm is the doctor who will cure Scotland of her disease—the tyranny of Macbeth.

28. **With him**—along with him. **In.....purge**—in ridding the country of the infamous tyrant. Blood-letting is the purge that will restore Scotland to health.

29. **Each drop of us**—every drop of blood that flows in our veins.

30. **Dew**—(bedew, freshens flowers). **Sovereign flower**—Malcolm, the legitimate King of Scotland, is compared to a flower to be freshened by the blood of the thanes. In 'sovereign' the two ideas of 'king' and 'supreme efficiency' are combined. **Drawn the weeds**—cause to disappear the misrule and tyranny of Macbeth.

ACT V : SCENE III

Analysis. Macbeth is quite sick of the report of the desertion of his thanes. Let them all run away from him, but he has nothing to fear until Birnam wood moves to Dunsinane. Malcolm is after all a boy, born of woman. Macbeth can surely trust the spirits that have assured him that he need not fear any man born of woman. Let all the thanes run away from him ; he is above all doubt and fear.

A servant enters now. His pale, timid face enrages Macbeth. He reports that an English army of ten thousand strong soldiers is marching against him. He reflects that his fate is depending ultimately on this battle. His life is now falling into decay, and he must not look forward to honour, love, obedience, friendship which should accompany old age. He would rather be greeted with curses.

Seyton now enters in answer to Macbeth's summons. Seyton too confirms the report about the English army. Macbeth wants to put on his armour. Then he turns to the Doctor and asks how his patient is getting on. The Doctor replies that she is troubled with thick-coming fancies. Macbeth asks him whether he can minister to a mind diseased, cure it of its deep-seated sorrow and bring forgetfulness to all the anguish of the heart. The Doctor

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declares his own helplessness in a matter like this. "Let medicine be then thrown to the dogs !" Macbeth says and wants again to put on the armour. He tells the Doctor that the thanes are deserting. He wishes that the Doctor could do something to restore Scotland to good health. He orders Seyton to bring the armour after him. He assures himself that he has nothing to fear until Birnam wood moves to Dunsinane. Yet he wishes that he could shake off the dust of Dunsinane from his feet ?

Critical Note. The scene brings the danger nearer and nearer to Macbeth. He is not wanting in personal courage, though trained somewhat with fear, the offspring of crime. Sometimes he falls back on either of the predictions that he has nothing to fear until Birnam wood moves of Dunsinane or that no man, born of woman, can ever hurt him. But the most tragic thing is not his fear of personal danger, but his sense of loneliness—the loneliness into which he has been forced by crime. He stands all alone ; Lady Macbeth who is regarded as an instigator to crime, is no longer by his side. So what Macbeth feels most poignantly is the desertion of the thanes. The lines beginning :

"My way of life.
Is fall'n into the sear, the yellow leaf."

sum up the despair of a soul that once alive to the fair and gracious things of life, but now writhes in pain and anguish.

Notes and Explanations

1. **Bring.....reports**—Macbeth is sick of the report of the desertion of his thanes. **Them**—the thanes. **Fly**—go over to the enemy.

3. **I cannot taint with fear**—I cannot give way to fear. **Taint**—become infected. **What's**—of what description is.

5. **Mortal consequences**—events that will be for mortals in course of time. **Me**—ethic dative.

7. **Have power upon thee**—affect your destiny.

8. **Mingle**—join hands. **Epicures**—the English who are fond of good living. Holinshed speaks of the Scots as having nothing to do with fine fair,' 'ritotous surfeit,' while Englishmen brought to the land the vice of 'superfluous gormadizing. An 'epicure' is one who is supposed to follow the teachings of the Greek philosopher Epuicurus to whom has been attributed the doctrine—'let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die.' This is certainly a perversion of the real doctrine of Epicurus.

9. **The mind I sway by**—(1) a firm decision by which my actions are directed ; (2) the strength of determination which enables me to rule as king. **Heart**—courage.

10. **Sag**—droop.

7-10. (*Explanation*). **Then fly.....fear**—Macbeth is really

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hurt by the desertion of his thanes. These thanes are going over to the English. Macbeth describes the English as epicures, who are fond of good living—eating and drinking. Macbeth boasts that he is not certainly like these English epicures. He has a balanced mind and a heart full of courage ; so he can never be assailed by doubt and fear.

11. **Damn thee black**—drag you down to hell and put you there to suffer till you are black. **Cream-faced**—pale with fear. **Loon**—stupid fellow.

12. **Where.....look**—why do you look so frightened ? **Goose look**—a pale white face. A goose is an emblem of cowardice.

13. Geese—repeated from 'goose' in line 12 put indicative of Macbeth's contempt for the English epicures.

14. **Prick thy face**—in order to make it bleed. **Over-red**—ridden over.

15. **Lily-liver'd**—cowardly. The liver was supposed to be the seat of courage, and a white liver indicated lack of courage. **What soldiers**—Macbeth of course knows that they are English soldiers, but still he wants to make sure. **Patch**—fool. Professional fools were called patches because they usually wore a patched dress.

16. **Death of thy soul**—a plague on you ! **Linen**—as white as linen ; utterly pale through fear.

17. **Are counsellors to fear**—(1) counsel others to fear ; infeet other with cowardice ; (2) are the confidants and companions of fear. **Whey-face**—pale face.

18. **So please you**—provided it may please you.

19. **Take thy face hence**—go away from here ; I do not want to see your face again. **Seyton**—the name is appropriately chosen because the Seytons of Touch were hereditary armour-bearers to the kings of Scotland. **Sick at heart**—so sorely oppressed with troubles, as to be in despair.

20. **This push**—(1) attempt (2) onset ; (3) assault of fortune ; crisis.

21. **Cheer me ever**—make me happy for ever be establishing myself on the throne. **Disseat**—unseat ; dethrone. **as**—antithesis, to 'cheer,' disease for 'disseat' has been suggested—will cheer me ever, or disseat me now. 'Cheer' carries on the thought of, 'I am sick at heart.' But it breaks into the metaphor vivid, in 'push' and 'disseat.' Another suggested reading is 'chair' for 'cheer.'

22. **I have.....enough**—Macbeth is now sick of life ; life seems to have dragged on with him. **My way of life**—the course of my life.

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23. **Is fall'n into**—has sunk to the level of. **Sear**—(1) withered state ; (2) dry, withered. **Yellow leaf**—symbolical of autumn.

25. **Troops**—large number.

26. **I must not look to have**—I must go without.

27. **Not loud but deep**—not boldly expressed, but cherished deeply in the hearts. **Mouth-honour**—lip-reverence. **Breath**—mere words of flattery.

28. **Poor**—craven. **Would fain deny**—would gladly withhold.

20-28 (*Explanation*). **This push.....dare not**—The future before Macbeth is now blank. He has nothing but despair to face. The English are marching onward to invade Scotland. His fate is depending on this battle. It will either make him happy for ever by establishing him firmly on the throne, or depose him. He seems to have grown sick of life, for he has lived so long. Now the decay of age is creeping on him. He compares his life to the decay of autumn. Old age will come to every man, and in normal circumstances he would not have minded it. But he knows that he will have to go without the blessings of old age. Blood-stained as career has been, he cannot expect to have honour, love, obedience, friendship. On the other hand, he will be greeted with curses, which may not be boldly uttered, but which be deeply cherished in the heats of men—he will be treated with lip-reverence, with adulation, which the craven-hearted would rather refuse, if they dared. Supposing he survives the battle, he views the prospect of coming old age. It would be a barren old age, unattended by honour, love, obedience, friendship etc., and he cannot but shrink from such an old age.

30. **What.....pleasure**—what does your gracious majesty bid me do ?

31. **All.....reported**—all that has been reported about the movement of the English army has been found to be true.

32. **I'll fight.....hack'd**—this is courage born of despair. **Hack'd**—cut off in bits.

33. **'Tis not needed yet**—you need not put on your armour yet, for the enemy is not yet with in view.

35. **Horses**—horsemen. **Skirr**—scour.

37. **Not so sick**—not so physically ill as she is supposed to be.

38. **Thick-coming fancies**—morbid fancies crowding into her mind.

39. **That keep.....rest**—that prevent her from sleep.

40. **Minister**—apply healing remedies. **Mind diseased**—a mind afflicated with painful thoughts or morbid fancies.

41. **Pluck-sorrow**—root out from the memory the sorrow that is deep-seated.

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42. **Raze out**—wipe out. **Written troubles of the brain**—troubles lodged in the brain.

43. **Oblivious antidote**—a counteracting medicine that will cause forgetfulness.

44. **Cleanse** purify **Stuff'd**—overburdened. **Perilous stuff**—the tormenting thoughts that are menace of life.

45. **Weighs upon**—crushes.

40-45. (*Explanation*). **Canst thou not minister.....heart**—In his despair Macbeth now turns to the Doctor. He seems to be sorely perplexed, beset as he is by danger—the desertion of his thanes, and the coming on of the English army. The Doctor has come to report the condition of lady Macbeth. Macbeth wants to know whether the Doctor can cure the trouble of a mind such as his own. Is there a remedy for a sorrow that continually haunts the memory, or is permanently lodged in the brain ? Is there anything that can cause forgetfulness of the unhappy thoughts that rankle in the heart ? This is but a poor attempt to get his mind off from the present moment of crisis.

45. **Therein**—in a matter like this.

46. **Must minister to himself**—must be his own doctor.

47. **Physic**—the art of healing, or medicine. **I'll none of it**—I will have nothing to do with it.

48. **Staff**—(1) lance ; (2) general's baton. **Send out**—send out more horsemen. **Doctor.....me**—even to the doctor Macbeth confesses that the thanes are deserting him.

50. **Sir**—this is addressed to Seyton. **Dispatch**—be quick in putting on my armour.

50-51. **Cast...land**—diagnose what is wrong with my country. *N. B.* In Shakespeare's days inspection of a patient's urine was part of the accepted routine of diagnosis. **Cast**—examine. **Find her disease**—find out what is wrong with her.

52. **Purge it.....health**—*N. B.* It has been seen above that the thanes who are deserting Macbeth, think that it is not all right with the country ; and so they are going to meet the "medicine of the sickly weal," *i. e.*, Malcolm, and by shedding every drop of their blood they are going to cure the country of its ailment. Similarly Macbeth thinks that it is not all right with the country—the country is diseased because his thanes are deserting him. The deserting thanes know what the remedy is, and are going to apply that remedy. But Macbeth looks in vain for a remedy for the desertion of his thanes. **Pristine**—former.

53. **Applaud.....echo**—'applaud' is used here in the literary sense of clapping of hands—and Macbeth means that he will go on clapping his hands until it starts an unending series of echoes.

54. **Pull't off**—take of my armour. Macbeth is in a state of

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nervous excitability. He first asks Seyton to assist him in putting on his armours, and now he wants to discard it. In this very scene he says that his mind will not be assailed by doubt and fear, but now he seems to be distracted by anxieties.

55. **Rhubarb**—a drug used as a purgative. **Senna**—another drug used as a purgative.

56. **Scour**—clear out. **Hence**—from Scotland.

57. **Your royal preparation**—the military preparation that are going on in your country.

58 **Hear something**—hear a vague report of the coming of the English.

59. **Bane**—destruction.

61. **Away and clear**—at a safe distance.

62. **Profit**—any prospect of gain.

ACT V : SCENE IV

Analysis. The English, led Malcolm, Old Siward and his son, etc., now approach Birnam wood. Malcolm bids every soldier cut down a branch and carry it before him. By this he means the actual numbers of the army will be exaggerated. It is known to them that Macbeth is going to keep in Dunsinane, so he will have to stand a siege. Rather than speculate on the event of the battle, they prepare to take concerted measures to meet the situation.

Critical Note. The Scottish thanes have now joined the forces with the English, and they march on. Macbeth has good reason to be afraid of this combination, and wisely decides to keep in Dunsinane. He still clings to the hope that he has nothing to fear until Birnam wood moves to Dunsinane. But the impossible is made possible by Malcolm's command that every soldier should cut down a branch and carry it before him. Macbeth is still unconscious of his impending doom, wrought through the equivocation of the witches. The solemn courage and serious determination of Malcolm and his allies are fully portrayed in this scene.

Notes and Explanation

1. **Cousins**—the usual form of address by a king to a noble.

2. **Chambers will be safe**—(1) one can sleep in peace in his bed-room without fear of being murdered ; (2) one can talk freely in one's own home. **Nothing**—not at all.

4. **Hew**—cut. **Him**—ethic dative.

5. **Shadow**—conceal.

6. **Host**—army. **Discovery**—discoverers : spies. Abstract for concrete.

7. **Err in report of us**—given a exaggerated idea of our numerical strength. *N. B.* A 'moving wood' of this type is an incident recorded in many ancient legends. An actual occurrence is quoted

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from Scottish history ; Patrick, Earl of March, when leading an attack on Perth in 1332, adopted a similar expedient. But Shakespeare took incident from Holinshed, was probably repeating a mythical story, for Dunsinane is 15 miles from Birnam with the Tay flowing between, and Malcolm's soldiers would not have carried the boughs all that distance.

8. **No other but**—no other information than that. **Confident tyrant**—Macbeth so confident of success.

9. **Keeps still in Dunsinane**—is not going to leave Dunsinane, but will rather stand a siege.

10. **Setting down before't**—laying siege to it. **Main**—principal.

11-12. **For where there is advantage.....revolt**—(1) for in the open country where opportunities of desertion necessarily are given to his subjects both nobles and retainers have already revolted ; so is he keeps his men within the castle they cannot desert, but if he comes out, they would at once do so. **There is advantage to be given**—advantage is bound to be given. to the nobles and their retainers to revolt. **More and less**—the high and low ; nobles as well as ordinary soldiers. **Given him the revolt**—(1) stood out as rebellions against him ; (2) "wherever there is an advantageous position that might be given to Macbeth by loyal subject, there his subjects have abandoned the post to the enemy and have given him not 'advantage', but 'revolt.'—*Sprauge.*

13. **With him**—in his army. **Constrained things**—those who are forced to so ; those who do not get the chance of deserting.

14. **Whose hearts.....too**—who have no loyalty to Macbeth. **just censures**—judgments in order to be correct.

15. **Attend**—await. **The true event**—the final issue which will reveal the truth.

16. **Industrious soldiership**—earnest preparation for the battle. Let it be noted that Macduff, a veteran soldier mindly rebukes the optimism of the young Malcolm. It will not do to jump to conclusions. They cannot certainly be sure how many have deserted Macbeth, nor how many of those who are fighting for him, have little loyalty to him. These things can be properly judged, when they form their opinion on the result of the battle. So Macduff advises them to put forth all their vigour and energy in fighting. Deeds before words—that seems to be Macduff's maxim.

17. **With due decision**—in a perfectly decisive manner.

18. **What.....have**—what we may claim to have accomplished. **What we owe**—What remains for us to do. **Owe**—are still under an obligation to perform.

19. **Thoughts speculative**—speculations. **Their unsure hopes relate**—lead us to cherish uncertain hopes. **Relate**—give utterance to.

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20. **But certain issue.....arbitrate**—but the actual fighting will decide the result of the struggle and reduce it to certainty. **Certain**—used proleptically. **Strokes**—blows. **Arbitrate**—determine.

21. **Advance the war**—let the soldiers advance in war array.

16-21. (*Explanation*). **The time approaches.....advance the war**—Macduff seems to be less optimistic than his companions. He wants that they should reserve their judgment until the result of the battle is known. Siward too seems to agree with Macduff. In fact as Siward says, they cannot definitely know what they have accomplished, and what still remains to be done until they fight the battle and until the result is decisive. It is not good indulging in mere speculation. Speculation may give rise to hopes that may never be fulfilled. What the final result of the struggle will be, is to be determined by actual blows. So the best thing for them to do is to march forward and hasten the battle.

ACT V : SCENE V

Analysis. Macbeth orders flags to be hung out from the outward walls of the fortress. The cry is still, "They come." Macbeth is confident that the castle's strength will be able to resist a seige. He hopes that the enemy will be beaten up by famine and fever. If the English had not been reinforced by the rebels, Macbeth might have met them in the open.

Now he hears a cry within—a cry of women. But it does not seem to startle him. In fact he has outgrown all fears. There was a time when his blood would have run cold if he had heard a night-shriek ; or his hair would have stood on end if he had read a story of shuddering horror. Now he is fed up with horrors. Seyton re-enters with the news that the queen is dead. The only comment that Macbeth makes is that she should have chosen a better time to die. Life is after all a sad affair, that drags on from day to day. It is like a brief candle, a walking shadow, a poor player who plays his part on the stage and then is heard no more. Life is a tale told by an idiot, having little meaning in it.

Now enters a messenger. He hesitates to report what he has seen. Macbeth bids him go on. He says that as he stood his watch on the hill, he looked at Birnam and it seemed to him that the wood began to move. At first Macbeth can hardly believe it. But the messenger stakes his very life on the truth of what he has seen. He repeats that Macbeth can see a moving wood within a distance of three miles. Macbeth threatens to hang him on the next tree if what he says proves to be untrue. But if it proves true, he may as well be hanged. Now he begins to realise that the witches deal in equivocation. If Birnam wood is coming to Dunsinane, there is no sense in staying in, or running away. Let the signal for battle be sounded. He will rather go out, and meet the enemy in the open.

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Critical Note. It has been shown above that Macbeth has been driven from crime to crime to reprieve the unrest of his soul. The more he has drifted into crime, the more he has drifted apart from Lady Macbeth. Spiritually Macbeth is dead, his imagination being atrophied, his sensibilities having perished—and he is now a mere husk of what he was. No other event could have brought it so vividly before us than the apathy of Macbeth when he hears of his wife's death.

"Alas for Macbeth ! Now all is inward with him ; he has no more prudential prospective reasonings. His wife, the only being who could have had any seat in his affections, died ; he puts on despondency, the final heart armour of the wretched, and would feign think everything shadowy and unsubstantial, as indeed all things are to those who cannot regard them as symbols of goodness."—*Coleridge.*

"His outward activity must help to absorb his mind, for his foes are marching against him ; the reality before him is quite as terrible as any image can be a familiarity with crime has hardened his thoughts ; repetition of guilt has seared his conscience. Hence no retributive ghosts appear after the murder of Macduff's family. But his whole mind is seared, too, it is a desolation.....Since the cessation of his imagination his spirit is dead, because his imagination was the centre of his spiritual activity,"—*Snider.*

Notes and Explanations

1. **Hang out.....walls**—the banners are to be displayed on the outward walls as a sign of defiance.

2. **The cry.....come**—all the reports that reach me, tells me that the enemy is coming on.

3. **Laugh.....scorn**—defy a siege.

4. **Famine**.....starvation. Ague—a kind of malarial fever. **Eat them up**—kill them off.

5. **Were they not**—if they had not been. **Forced**—reinforced. **Those.....our**—the Scottish deserters.

6. **Dareful**—defiantly. **Beard to beard**—face to face.

STAGE DIRECTION. **A cry of women within**—the maids attending on the queen give a shriek when they find her dead.

9. **Forgot the taste of fears**—have become a stranger to fear. His feelings and sensibilities have been paralysed by crime ; so he is dead to all fears.

10. **My senses would cool'd**—a cold shiver would have run through me.

11. **To hear**—on hearing. **Night-shriek**—"such as that from a human voice through sudden terror or that from the cries of birds of ill-omen, or from the wailings of wraths and such like super-

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natural beings of superstition."—*Percival.* **Fell of hair**—head with the hair on it.

12. **Dismal treatise**—a story of shuddering horror. **Rouse and stir**—stand on end.

13. **As**—as if. **Supp'd full with horrors**—fed full on horrors.

9-13. (*Explanation*). **I have almost.....horrors**—There is a sudden cry of women. It is a cry of horror, but it leaves Macbeth cold. It shows—and Macbeth is also conscious—that a great change for the worse has taken place in Macbeth—a degradation involving the paralysis of his feelings and imagination. So long his imagination was active in him, he was susceptible to fears ; now imagination being dead, he is a stranger to any fear. There was a time when he would have shuddered to hear a cry of the human voice or of a supernatural being at night, of his hair would have stood on end if he had read a ghostly story. But now horrors hardly affect him. He seems to have fed full of horrors.

14. **Direness**—horrors. **Slaughterous**—murderous.

15. **Start**—startle.

17. **She should have died hereafter**—she should have chosen a better time to die. This is rather a heartless remark made by Macbeth, on hearing of the death of his wife. We have noticed above the widening gulf between Macbeth and his wife. In fact as Macbeth gave himself more and more to crime. Lady Macbeth seemed to have passed out of his life altogether. This heartless remark indicates the depth of his moral and spiritual degradation.

19-20. **To-morrow.....to day**—man's life drags on from day to day ; it is a dull and tame affair. **Creeps**—moves slowly. **In this petty pace**—with his dull regularity.

21. **Last syllable of recorded time**—the last moment of a man's life. **Recorded time**—the record of time : (1) "fixed in the decrees of Heaven for the period of life."—*Johnson* ; (2) recording or recordable—*Steevens* ; (3) that has been or shall be recorded—*Masson.*

20. **Lighted**—the metaphor of a will-o'-the-wisp. Man has been lured on by the false gleam of hope until he meets death. **Fools**—men and women who let themselves be deluded with hopes that end in dust and ashes.

22-23. **Lighted.....death**—the idea is : in his life man is lured on by rosy hopes till all ends in dust and ashes, and he himself meets death. The point is that if every tomorrow did not appear attractive, men would not have cared to bear the burden of a life, that is would not have cared to bear the burden of a life that is all vanity.

23. **Dusty death**—death which turns everything into dust. Compare : "For dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return." (*Genesis*, iii, 19). **Out, out, brief candle**—life is

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compared to a brief candle—a candle that burns for a shortwile and then goes out.

24. **A walking shadow**—a mere phantom. It seems to be a metaphor from the stage, for actors were often called *Shadows*. Compare also : "His days are as a shadow that passeth away."—(*Psalms*, cxliv. 4). 'Walking shadow' may also mean a passing shadow. **Poor player**—a third-rate actor.

25. **Struts**—walks with affected majesty. **Frets**—shows impatient anger. **His hour**—for the short time allotted to him.

27. **Full.....fury**—full of bluster and empty boasting.

28. **Signifying nothing**—absolutely meaningless.

17-28. (*Explanation*). **She should have died.....nothing**—When Macbeth hears of the death of his wife, he is very apathetic. All that he says is that she should have chosen a better time to die. Rather it had been heartless for Lady Macbeth to leave him in such a mess of things. In his interest she should have postponed her death a little longer. Then Macbeth generalises about life. Life seem to drag on from day to day. To-morrow ever appears in rosy tints before the eyes of men and women. Each carries on till the allotted period of life has been exhausted. The bright hopes that lure men and women on, soon fade away ; and all that awaits them is the dusty oblivion of death. Then Macbeth compares life to a candle that burns for a few moments and then goes out. He compares it to a passing shadow, to a third-rate actor, who plays his tricks on the stage for his allotted period of time, and then is heard no more. Life seems to Macbeth to be a tale told by an idiot ; there is a lot of wild and ranting talk in it, but it has no meaning. These lines express the darkest cynicism, which has invaded Macbeth's soul. They can mark only the complete blight that has fallen upon his imagination and sensibilities.

29. **To use thy tongue**—to tell me something. **The story quicky**—be out quickly with your message.

30. **Gracious my lord**—this is the regular word-order when the possessive adjective is unemphatic.

31. **I say, I saw**—I can confidently say that I saw, though I can hardly believe what I saw.

32. **Well, say, sir**—Macbeth is careful to keep his temper with the messenger, but he cannot do so long. He breaks out into abuse below.

33. **Did stand my watch**—stood on sentry duty. **Hill**—Dunsinane hill.

34. **Anon**—soon. **Methought**—it seemed to me.

35. **Liar and slave**—Macbeth has no reason to call him a liar and slave without having had an opportunity of testing his statement. In fact, at the announcement made by the messenger,

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Macbeth's heart leaps into his mouth. If what the messenger says, turns out to be true, then he has nothing but despair before him.

36. **Endure your wrath**—suffer whatever punishment you in your anger might inflict on me. **If't be not so**—if my statement is proved to be untrue.

37. **Within this three mile**—within the length of three miles from here.

38. **Moving grove**—the whole forest in motion.

40. **Famine cling thee**—hunger shrivel you up. **Cling**—wither. **Sooth**—truth.

41. **I care not.....much**—I do not mind if you treat me in the same way—hang me alive on the next tree till I starve to death.

42. **Pull in resolution**—check my confidence. **Pull in**—the metaphor of reining in a horse. **Resolution**—conviction ; certainty. "He had permitted his courage (like a fiery horse) to carry him to the brink of precipice, but seering his danger, resolves to check that confidence to which he had given the rein before."—*Steevens.*

43. **Doubt.....fiend**—suspect the ambiguous of the devilish apparition. **Equivocation**—using words in a double sense. Now Macbeth begins to realise that the predictions of the witches have a double meaning.

44. **Lies like truth**—tells lies in language that my mistaken for the truth ; is plausible and convincing like truth, yet false and misleading.

44-45. **Fear not...Dunsinane**—Macbeth repeats the prediction of the spirit to himself, and now begins to see how it bears a double meaning.

46. **Arm, arm, and out**—take up your arms and march out from the castle to meet the enemy. There is no sense now in keeping in Dunsinane. Macbeth resolves to go out and meet the enemy in the open. The point is that instead of pinning his faith to the predictions of the witches, he would rather now depend on his own valour.

47. **Avouches**—declares. **Does appear**—is really visible.

48. **Flying hence**—getting away from Dunsinane. **Tarrying here**—keeping in Dunsinane. **There is.....here**—there is no sense in trying to escape, nor in keeping in Dunsinane.

49. **'Gin**—begin. **'I gin.....sun**—again Macbeth gives expression to his heart-sickness. He seems to be quite fed up with life, and wishes to be done with it.

50. **Wish.....undone**—Macbeth also wishes the whole universe to be wrecked with his own destruction. Macbeth is "always mixing up his deeds and himself with the whole universe of nature." —**Stopford Brooke.** **Estate**—settled condition.

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51. **Ring the alarum-bell**—this continues to ring till the end of the play. **Wrack**—ruin.

52. **We'll.....back**—I will die fighting. **Harness**—armour ; now generally used to mean the gear of a horse.

ACT V : SCENE VI

Analysis. As the combined English and Scottish armies draw near, Macolm assumes their leadership. He bids them throw down the boughs of trees which have concealed their actual numbers till now. He draws up the battle order. Siward and his son are to lead the first line ; Macduff and Malcolm will lead the second. If they do not put all their hearts into the fighting, let them be beaten by Macbeth. Then he bids the trumpets sound the signal for battle.

Critical Note. It is a brief scene, concerned with the disposition of the army. It is quite evident that Malcolm is the acknowledged leader. He uses the royal 'we' ; that means he is so confident of victory.

Notes and Explanations

1. **Near enough**—we have come near enough to the castle. **Leavy screens**—the leafy boughs of tree, which the soldiers are carrying before them to conceal their actual numbers. **Leavy**—full of leaves.

2. **Show.....are**—appear as you really are in your actual numerical strength. **Worthy uncle**—old Siward.

3. **Right-noble**—truly noble.

4. **Our first battle**—the main division of our army ; the vanguard. **Battle**—battallion. **We**—(Malcolm means himself) Royal plural.

5. **To do**—to be done.

6. **Order**—plan of battle.

7. **Do we but.....to-night**—"Holinshed says, the advance from Birnam wood under cover of the ruse of the boughs, took place at night, so that, the attacking army might be close upon the enemy, before the trick was discovered ; it was discovered when they are only three miles off, and have thus cut off Macbeth's chance of a flight (as he himself has said). In the Chronicle, the battle takes place next morning ; here in the play it evidently begins in the small hours of the night, and the difference is not great."—*Percival.* **Find**—meet. **The tyrant's power**—the forces of Macbeth.

8. **Let us be beaten**—let us deserve defeat.

9. **Make.....speak**—let all our trumpets be sounded.

10. **Breath**—speech ; utterance. **Clamorous**—noisy. **Harbingers**—messengers.

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Act V : Scene VII

Analysis. Macbeth finds himself in a desparate strait. He cannot take refuge in flight, but must have to face the enemy. The last hope to which he clings is that no man, born of woman, can do any harm to him. Ten young Siward encounters Macbeth. Siward challenges Macbeth. When young Siward learns that his enemy is Macbeth, he is not in the least afraid, but fights with him. Young Siward is slain. Macbeth's confidence revives when he kills Siward. At any rate it proves that no man born of a woman can do him harm.

Then enters Macduff, hearing certain noise in this direction. If Macbeth has been slain and slain by somebody else, then the ghosts of his wife and children will give him no peace of mind, it is no use striking at the hirelings. Either he will strike at Macbeth or he will let his sword rest in its sheath. Macbeth passes on, following the noise. Then enter Malcolm and old Siward. By this time the castle has surrendered. The enemy seemed to have offered little resistance. The victory is almost Malcolm's.

Critical Note. The scene depicts the encounter between two forces. Macbeth has left the protection of the castle, and came forth to meet his enemy. He realises how desperate his position is. There is no safety in flight ; in fact his flight has been cut off. He can but die with harness on his back, as he has resolved to do beforehand. His confidence seemsto revive when he kills young Siward. Macduff now appears. He is seeking Macbeth. But the encounter between Macduff and Macbeth is postponed to the next scene.

Notes and Explanations

1. **Tied me to a stake**—I am as helpless as a deer that is tied to a pole, and has to face the dogs let loose on it. Macbeth implies his desperate position. He cannot give the enemy the slip. By comparing himself to a bear, tied to a stake (the metaphor from bear-baiting), he means to say that he is at bay—he must face the enemy, and do what he can to save himself or to beat the enemy.

2. **Bear like**—like a bear enchained who has to face the enraged dogs. **Fight the course**—go through the torture of facing my foes. 'Course' is a technical term ; each separate attack on a deer by a batch of dogs in a 'course.' **What's he**—who might he be.

2-3. **What's.....woman**—can there be one among the mortals, not born of woman ?

3-4. **Such a one.....none**—Macbeth now desperately clings to the prediction that no man born of a woman can do harm to him.

6. **A better name—a more frightful name.**

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7. **Than any is in hell**—than the name of any devil in hell.

9. **Nor more fearful**—not only my name is more hateful than any to you, but it is more fearful.

10. **Abhorred**—detestable. **With my sword**—in fighting you hand to hand with my sword.

11. **Prove the lie thou speak'st**—show that what you say is not true.

12. **Laugh to scorn**—defy.

13. **Brandish'd**—when they are wielded.

14. **That way the noise is**—Macduff follows the direction of alarums. **Tyrant, show thy face**—let me but meet you Macbeth.

16. **My wife...still**—the ghosts of my wife and children will ever trouble me, and I can have no peace of mind.

17. **I cannot strike**—there is no sense in striking. **Kerns**—ordinary soldiers. **Wretched kerns**—Macbeth's army now consists only of his Irish or Hebridean mercenaries."—*Grierson.*

18. **Staves**—quarter staffs ; clubs. "The common kerns or light infantry of those days were wretchedly armed for offence, and were destitute of all deffensive armour."—*Percival.* **Either thou**—either you shall meet me in battle.

19. **With.....edge**—without the edge of the sword being hacked or blunted.

20. **Sheathe**—replace in the scabbard. **Undeeded**—without its having been employed in any deed or fare of arms.

21. **Clatter**—noise. **One of greatest note**—a person of the highest eminence.

22. **Bruited**—noisily heralded. **Let me find him**—may this less eminent person be Macbeth.

23. **More I beg not**—I do not beg any other or any greater favour of you.

24. **Gently render'd**—surrendered without resistance.

25. **On both sides**—some have joined the ranks of Malcolm and some are fighting with those who are still loyal to Macbeth.

26. **Bravely**—valiantly and excellently.

27. **The day.....yours**—you may already claim the victory to be yours.

28. **Little is to do**—little remains for us to do.

29. **Strike besides us**—(1) fight by our side after having deserted Macbeth ; (2) aim their blows, not at us, but in the air ; in striking they miss us intentionally.

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Analysis. The position is now of still more despair for Macbeth ; his castle having already surrendered. Should he take his own life like the Roman hero ? He scorns the very idea of it. Why should he kill himself, while there are living-beings whom he might still kill ? Now Macduff encounters Macbeth. Macbeth would have liked to avoid Macduff, for his soul is already too much charged with the blood of his wife and children. But Macduff summons him to fight. Macbeth warns him that he can do nothing, for he bears a charmed life, which will not yield to one born of woman. Macbeth is now stunned to hear that Macduff was untimely ripped from his mother's womb. Macbeth's heart sinks within him. He curses the evil spirits, that could betray the mortals with such equivocation. At first he refuses to fight with Macduff. Then Macduff calls upon him to surrender, to be exhibited later as a rare monster, with the inscription that people may see the tyrant here. Macbeth's courage returns at the humiliation which Macduff pictures to him. So he is not going to yield. He throws his shield before his body ; and then invites Macduff to lay on.

It is another part of the battlefield. The battle is now over, Malcolm, old Siward, Ross and others have assembled. But they miss certain friend. Of course some of them have fallen in battle. Young Siward is one of them. Ross confirms the report of young Siward's soldiers-like death. Old Siward is glad to hear, that his son died fighting, and did not fun away. If he had as many sons as he has hairs, he could not have wished a more glorious death to them.

Now enters Macduff with Macbeth's head. Macduff greets Malcolm as king, as he beholds him surrounded by all the nobility of Scotland. He also calls upon the Scottish thanes to greet Malcolm as king with their voices and they do so. Malcolm at once creates his thanes and kinsmen earls. He is also going to take measures to recall those of his friends who are now in exile, and to punish the agents of Macbeth. He gives thanks to all and everybody who had stood by him, and secured the victory for him.

Critical Note. In the last scene, in which Macbeth meets his doom, there is again human touch in his character. It has been noted above that his wife's death left him quite apathetic. His imagination and sensibilities have been deadened by crime. But his conscience is not wholly dead. He wishes to spare Macduff for his soul is already charged too much with the blood of his wife and children. This is the human touch in Macbeth. Our sympathies seem to be partially restored to Macbeth in his dying moment. After all his soul was once great, though it had been degraded and ruined by crimes. Ambition was his fatal sin ; and we do believe that if left to himself, he might have let his ambition lie dormant.

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within him instead of taking any steps to realise it. As we have seen, he was egged on by the chiding tongue of his wife, and the subtle incitement of the witches.

Notes and Explanations

1. **Play the Roman fool**—adopt the foolish practice of Roman general. A Roman general would rather kill himself then surrender to the enemy. Many of Shakespeare's old characters from Roman history, such as, Cato, Cassius, Brutus and Antony, committed suicide. In *Julius Caesar*, Titinius, in committing suicide says, "This is a Roman's part" ; and in *Antony and Cleopetra*, Cleopetra calls it the "high Rowan fashion." **Why should I.....fool**—Macbeth has no faith in suicide, as practised by a Roman hero, when he had to choose between death and capitivity.

2. **On mine own sword**—by running on my own sword. **Lives**—living foemen. **Gashes**—fatal sword wounds.

3. **Do better upon them**—are better inflicted on them than on myself. **Turn**—Macduff sees Macbeth from behind and bids him face turn about. **Hell-hound**—the agent of the devil.

4. **Of all men else**—among all men other than you. There is a confusion of constructions between superlative—of all men I have avoided you most, and the comparative no man else I have avoided more than you.

5. **Get thee back**—I let you retire ; I will spare you. **Charged**—burdened.

5-6. **My soul.....already**—*N. B.* Macbeth's soul has not yet been killed ; it still feels remorse, and remorse keeps Macbeth's soul human. So he will rather spare Macduff, because he cannot forgive himself for having ordered the murder of his wife and children, which preys upon his soul.

6. **With.....already**—with the guilt of having shed the blood of your wife and children. **I have no words**—I have not come to argue with you.

7. **My voice is in my sword**—my sword will speak for me.

8. **Terms**—language. **Give thee out**—describe you. **Thou losest labour**—you are wasting you energy.

9. **An easy**—as easily. **Intrenchant**—invulnerable.

10. **Impress**—search ; inflict wounds on.

11. **Blade**—sword. **Vulnerable crests**—heads of persons who are not proved against wounds.

12. **I bear a charmed life**—my life is protected by magic. *N. B.* In the days of chivalry, before the duel commenced, each combatant had to declare, on his honour, that he was using no charmed weapon. Thus, Macbeth warns Macduff of the supernatural protection he enjoys against any one born of woman.

8-13. (*Explanation*). **Thou losest.....born**—When Macduff encounters Macbeth on the battlefield, Macbeth has a tender feeling

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for him. The murder of Macduff's wife and children is still on his conscience : and he would rather spare Macduff. He would let Macduff go, but draws his sword, and comes on. Then Macbeth warns him that it would be labour wasted. Macduff might as well think of inflicting wounds on the invulnerable air as drawing blood from Macbeth. Macbeth tells him that he bears a life, protected by magic, which will not yield to one born of woman. His life is protected by magic in the sense that no man born of woman can ever kill him.

13. **Despair the charm**—place no more faith in your magic protection.

14. **Angel**—evil genius. **Still**—always.

16. **Untimely**—before the full period of gestation was over. **Ripp'd**—torn out ; forcibly taken out. Macduff was not born naturally, but was prematurely delivered from his mother's womb either by surgical operation, or as the result of an accident that tore her womb open. In Toutonic mythology premature birth is held to forebode heroic strength and there are many legendary heroes who are described as having been born like Macduff.

18. **Cow'd**—subdued. **My better part of man**—the nobler part of my mandood.

19. **Juggling**—prevaricating.

20. **Palter.**—equivocate : quibble. **In a double sense**—with intent to deceive ; using words of ambiguous import.

21. **Keep.....ear**—make promises that have a plausible air or which sound all right.

22. **Break...hope**—disappoint our hopes.

17-22. (*Explanation*). **Accursed.....fight with thee**—The last hope of Macbeth is dashed to the ground when Macduff tells him that he was ultimately ripped from his mother's womb. Till now Macbeth had fortified himself with the belief that no man born of woman could ever do harm to him. The result of Macduff's announcement was that his heart sank within him. Now he realised that he should not have believed those evil spirits, who played with the sense of words. They tempt and misled mortals by dealing in prophecies of ambiguous import. They say one thing, and mean another. Their prophecies sound all right, but they fail in accomplishment—they run counter to men's hopes. When Macbeth's last hope fails him, he refuses to fight with Macduff.

23. **Yield thee**—surrender.

24. **Live.....time**—and I shall let you live so that you may be exhibited as a rare monster to the public. **The show.....time**—an exhibit for the public. *N. B.* Monsters and other freaks of nature and performing beasts were exhibited at the fairs and festivals of Shakespeare's time, and they attracted large crowds.

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26. **Painted upon a pole**—painted on a piece of cloth hanging from a pole. This will be an advertisement for the monster. **Underwrit**—underwritten, or written under.

28. **Kiss the ground**—prostrate myself on the ground.

29, **Baited**—tormented ; badgered as a bear is by dogs. **Rabble's curse**—the curse of the multitude.

31. **Thou opposed**—you being an enemy of mine.

32. **Try the last**—make a last effort to defy fate.

33. **War-like shield**—war-shield. **Lay on**—strike with your sword.

34. **Damn'd be him**—let him be damned. **Hold**—cease fighting. **Enough**—I have had enough. "The natural physical boldness of Macbeth breaks forth in the very face of despair."—*Elwin.*

STAGE DIRECTION. The Folio stage directions are now altered to avoid the slaying of Macbeth on the stage. **Flourish**—a fanfare to horns to indicate the approach of an important personage. The 'retreat' is sounded by Macbeth's army, the 'flourish' by Malcolm's.

35. **Would**—wish that. **Miss**—do not find here. **Were safe arrived**—have not been slain in battle.

37. **Go off**—euphemism for die. A stage metaphor. **By these**—judging by the presence of these.

37. **So great a day.....bought**—so great a victory has been achieved with little loss.

39. **Paid soldier's debt**—died fighting as a soldier should do.

40. **Till he was a man**—till he attained manhood.

41. **Prowess**—physical strength. **Confirm'd**—proved.

42. **Unshrinking station**—the post or duty from which he did not move. Unshrinking is a transferred epithet.

44. **Brought off**—his body has been brought from.

46. **Must not.....worth**—cannot be estimated in terms of his valour.

45-46. **For then.....end**—if your sorrow is to bear proportion to his worth, then it must be endless and measureless.

46. **Had he his hurts before ?**—did he receive wounds in front ? The old father wants to know whether his son when slain was facing or running away from the enemy.

47. **Front**—forehead. **God's soldier be he**—he has died nobly. May his conduct win God's approbation !

49. **Wish them to**—commend them to.

50. **And so.....knoll'd**—that is all we need say by way of lamenting his death. **Knoll**—funeral bell. **He's.....sorrow**—we cannot dismiss him from our memory so summarily ; his nobility

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deserves to be better appreciated and his loss more fully deplored.

51. **That.....him**—I shall have time to mourn him more adequately. The idea is that young Siward's death has to be paid for more adequate sorrow. **No more**—no more sorrow than what I have spent on him.

52. **Parted**—departed this life. **Well**—creditably. **Paid his Score**—literally, paid what he owned to the tavern-keeper. Metaphorically, discharged his debt to society before his heath. **Score**—account kept by cutting notches on a stick. The earthly life is compared to the hours spent in a tavern.

53. **God be with him**—good-bye. **Newer comfort**—a subject of fresh comfort.

54. **Stands**—remains fixed. Macduff points to Macbeth's decapitated head which he is carrying on a pole.

55. **The time is free**—our countrymen are rid of Macbeth's tyranny.

56. **Compass'd with**—encircled by. **Thy kingdom's pearl**—the Scottish nobility.

57. **That speak.....minds**—They hail you as their king *mentally* as I do *vocally*.

58. **Whose voices.....mine**—whom I beg to join me in giving you a rousing salute.

60. **Large expense**—long period.

61. **Reckon.....loves**—estimate the gratitude which I own you each. **Reckon with**—settle accounts with. **Your several loves**—the love each of you has shown for me.

62. **Make us even with you**—require you adequately. **Even with**—free from obligations to.

63. **Be earls**—Malcolm introduced regular feudalism into England. He also adopted and introduced many England customs, especially after his marriage with Margaret, sister of Edgar the Atheling.

64. **In.....named**—designated by such an honourable title. **What's more to do**—what else remains to be done.

65. **Would be planted**—should be begun at once. **With the time.....**with the beginning of the new era in the country.

66. **As**—such as. **Calling home**—recalling.—**Exiled friends abroad**—friends living in exile in foreign lands.

67. **That fled.....tyranny**—left the country in order to avoid falling victims to the intrigues of the spying tyrant. **Watchful tyranny**—vigilant tyrant.

68. **Producing forth**—bringing to justice. **Ministers**—**agents**.

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70. **By self and violent hands**—by violence committed by herself. **Self**—her own.

71. **Took off her life**—put an end to her own life. **This**—calling home, producing forth, etc. **What needful else**—anything else that is necessary.

72. **Calls upon us**—devolves on me to do.

73. **In measure, time, and place**—as far as is required and at the proper time and place.

74. **At once**—collectively.

75. **Crown'd at Scone**—Macbeth was first defeated by Siward on July 27, 1054. On August 15, 1057, Macduff defeated and slew Macbeth at Lumphanan in Mar. These two incidents have been run into one in the play. Malcolm was crowned a few days after Macbeth's death.

The closing lines of Malcolm's speech "not only draw together in one point, as is required, the several surviving threads of interest, but show us decisively the pre-dominant impression which the dramatist intended to leave on the minds of his audience. They are like a gleam of evening sunshine, bidding 'farewell sweet' after 'so fair and foul a day."—*Fletcher.*

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QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Q. 1. Discuss the date of the composition of Macbeth.
[*C. U., Hon., 1927.*]

Or

Examine the evidence which helps us to determine the date of the composition of Macbeth. [*C. U. 1927.*]

Ans. *Macbeth* was first published in the folio of 1623. It is not possible to fix the precise time of its composition. But the date may be determined by external and internal evidences of a fairly convincing character. There is little doubt that the play must have been composed earlier than April, 1610. Dr. Simon Forman gives in his diary a detailed account of the play, when he saw it represented at the Globe Theatre on April 20, 1610. It implies, therefore, that the play could not have been written later than 1610.

On the other hand, there is evidence to show that it could not have been written before 1604. James I ascended the throne in March, 1603, and in the following year he was proclaimed King of Britain, France and Ireland. The lines spoken by Macbeth during the show of 'Eight Kings.'

"and some I see
The two-fold balls and treble scepters carry"
—(Act IV. i. 130-31).

refer to 'King James' coronation and to the union of the three Kingdoms under him. *Macbeth* may, therefore, be placed between 1604 and 1610. The balance of evidence seems to support 1606. Let us first examine the evidence in favour of 1606.

(1) In Middleton's play, *The Puritan* (1607) there is a passage, "We'll have a ghost in a white sheet sit at the upper end of the table." This seems to refer to Banquo's ghost in the play of *Macbeth.*

(2) On the occasion of James' visit to St. John's College, Oxford, in 1605, three boys, dressed as nymphs or Sibyls, delivered orations in English and Latin, foretelling the reign of Banquo's descendants. This incident might have suggested the writing of *Macbeth.*

(3) A history of *Macbeth* was inserted in the new edition of *Albion's England* by William Warner, published in 1606. It shows that the play of *Macbeth* had been then attracting public attention.

The investiture of Sir James Murray on April 7, 1605 with the dignities of Scone, forfeited by the Earl of Gowry for conspiracy against James, is supposed to have something to do with the bestowal of Cawdor's honours on Macbeth.

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The date of 1606 is also supported by the evidence contained within the play itself. The porter's speech abounds in topical allusions :

(i) The line, "Faith", here's an equivocator that could swear in both the scales against either scale" is supposed to refer to the trial of one Jesuit Garnet, which took place in 1606. It is recorded in connection with the trial of Garnet that the Jesuits both allowed and taught their followers "to equivocate upon oath."

(ii) A reference to the abundant harvest of 1606 occurs in the line : the "farmer that hanged himself on the expectation of plenty."

(iii) "Stealing out of a French hose" refers to a fraud practised by the tailors of the day, and mentioned in Antony Nixon's *Black Year* (1606).

An examination of its thought and style will place the play in the same period. The plays of this period or near about it, namely *Hamlet*, *Othello*, *King Lear* show a greater seriousness of tone, a greater depth of thought and a wider knowledge of human life and character. They illustrate also the similar matrical characteristics, namely, an increased use of trisyllabic feet, of short lines, of double endings, of Alexandrines, an intermingling of prose and verse, a dropping of rhyme and unnatural conceits. It is generally called Shakespeare's third period of composition, and it extends from 1602 to 1608.

We may also consider arguments in favour of a later date :

(i) The main ground upon which it is based is the entry in Dr. Forman's Diary. It is argued that the play must have been a new one ; otherwise Dr. Forman would not have cared to leave a detailed account of it. The argument cannot be accepted. The play might have been a new one to Dr. Forman.

(ii) In *The Knight of the Burning Pestle*, a burlesque by Beaumont and Fletcher published in 1611, there is a pointed reference to Banquo's ghost :

"When thou art at the table with thy friends,
Merry in heart and filled with swelling wine,
I'll come in the midst of all thy pride and mirth,
Invisible to all men but thyself,
And whisper such a sad tale in thine ears,
Shall make thee let the cup fall from thy hand,
And stand as mute and pale as death itself."

The advocates of the later date hold that this allusion would be meaningless if the play were not a new one in 1611. All that we can say is that the passage may have been suggested by Banquo's ghost in *Macbeth* ; so it may be presumed that *Macbeth* had been before the public for some time. In any case it seems to be better to accept 1606 for the date of Macbeth.

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Q. 2. Discuss the sources from which Shakespeare borrowed his material for *Macbeth* and point out the resemblances as well as deviations, made by Shakespeare in writing the play.

Ans. Shakespeare did not care to invent any plot or story. He would rather adopt a story ready-made. But he gives it a new tone and colour, and invents characters to fit it with it, so that the borrowed story becomes an original one with Shakespeare's magic of poetry and invention.

We may start by quoting the following remarks of Dr. Furness : "What false impressions are conveyed in the phrases which we had used to express the process whereby Shakespeare converted the stocks and stones of the old dramas and chronicles into living, breathing men and women ! We may say 'he drew his original from this source, or he found his materials in that source.' But how much did he 'draw' or what did he 'find' ? If whatsoever make his tragedies sublime and heaven-high above all other human compositions of that we find never a trace."

Shakespeare's sole authority after the story of *Macbeth* is Holinshed's *Chronicle* of England, Scotland and Ireland. Shakespeare drew upon that source for most of the historical plays. Now it may be noted that the incidents in the plot of *Macbeth*, relating to King Duncan, are made up of incidents, such as the murder of King Duff (961-967) by Donwald, Lieutenant of Forres Castle, and the instigation of his wife, and the murder 'of King Duncan (1034-1040) by one of his generals, Macbeth, who then usurped the throne. The details of the murder of Duncan in the play and of the prodigies that follow it are suggested by the Duff story. The details of the rest of the plot are taken from Duncan's story in the *Chronicle*, and the witches seem to have been suggested by it. Shakespeare adheres closely to these two stories in so far as they serve its artistic purpose ; where they do not, his imagination creates and invents actions and characters for which there can be no sources.

We may note the following points of resemblance between *Macbeth* and Holinshed's *Chronicle* :

(*i*) Macbeth, a brave and successful general, was a cousion of King Duncan, and in conjunction with Banquo, subdued the enemies of the king.

(*ii*) The three 'weird sisters' predicted that Macbeth would be king after Duncan, and that Banquo's sons would also be kings.

(*iii*) Lady Macbeth instigated her husband to murder the King, and the sons of Duncan fled from Scotland after the murder.

(*iv*) Fearful portents attended the murder.

(*v*) After the first murder Macbeth grew suspicious of everybody and acted as a tyrant.

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(*vi*) Macbeth contrived the murder of Banquo though he could not get hold of his son, Fleance.

(*vii*) Macbeth grew suspicious of Macduff who left Scotland. Failing to get Macduff, Macbeth had the family of Macduff murdered.

(*viii*) Macbeth consulted again the weird sisters, and their ambiguous promises bred in him over-confidence.

(*ix*) The conversation between Malcolm and Macduff in England is closely based upon Holinshed.

(*x*) Malcolm, with the help of England, finally avenged the murder of his father, and freed Scotland from the usurpers. As to Shakespeare's deviations :

(*i*) The rebellion of Macdonwald, the invasion of Sweno, King of Norway, and a subsequent attack upon Scotland by the forces of Canute are distinct events in the *Chronicle*, occurring in different times, but Shakespeare blended them together for dramatic purposes.

(*ii*) In Holinshed, Madonward commits suicide. But in Shakespeare's play Macbeth kills him.

(*iii*) In representing the murder of Duncan. Shakespeare seems to have followed the Duff story and not the Duncan story. But in Holinshed King Duff is murdered by the four hired servants : in the play Macbeth himself murders Duncan.

(*iv*) In the *Chronicle* Banquo is murdered when he returns from the banquet. But Shakespeare's Banquo is murder on his way to the banquet.

(*v*) According to the *Chronicle*, Macbeth reigned for seventen years. Shakespeare has considerable curtailed the time of action for the sake of dramatic unity.

Shakespeare's art and imagination have been most vividly shown in dealing with the characters. It is necessary that the character of Duncan should be heightened, and that of Macbeth blackened. In Holinshed, Duncan is shown to be a weak and youthful king, whose neglect and supineness led to a great disaster. To increase the enormity of Macbeth's guilt, Shakespeare makes Duncan an old man and a good and generous king. In Holinshed, Macbeth is not only an able soldier under Duncan, but after him he becomes king. He shows himself a capable and strong ruler, promoting even justice and peace, and attending to the prosperity and welfare of his people. Shakespeare has nothing to do with this picture. Then again the character of Banquo is exalted, and his nobility of soul emphasized. In Holinshed, Banquo connives at the murder of Duncan. Banquo is intended by Shakespeare to be a foil to Macbeth. Holinshed lets Lady Macbeth be a woman of great ambition. From this hint Shakespeare develops Mo...

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character. In regard to the witches, Shakespeare makes a notable departure from the narrative of Holinshed. Shakespeare paints the witches as subtle creatures, and brings them into the closest relation with Macbeth's character.

Among Shakespeare's notable invention, we may mention the first scene of the play—the desolate open heath "where the evil powers of earth and sky may fittingly meet and greet hideous carnival"—the scene which strikes the key-note of the whole drama ; the dagger-scene with its profound effect on the imagination of the audience, the scene at the banquet, the great sleep-walking scene, with the wild incoherent speeches of Lady Macbeth.

Q. 3. Assuming that Shakespeare's plays afford internal evidence of continuous mental development and that his dramatic career is divisible into four (or three) periods, say in which period you put *Macbeth* and give the approximate date. Assign reasons fully. [*C. U., Hon., 1909*]

Ans. Shakespeare's works have been divided into four periods :

First Period (1588-1596) is the stage of experiments. In the descriptive phrase of Dowden—*In the workship,* the significance of Shakespeare's early career is very well conveyed. Such plays as *Love's Labour's Lost*, *The Comedy of Error*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, etc. ; belong to this period. They all illustrate a happy-go-lucky mood, a dallying with life and its joys. The plot is sometimes ingeniously constructed, but there is little grasp of character and action.

Second Period (1596-1601) has been termed by Dowden—*In the world.* Shakespeare develops greater interest in men and things; his imagination begins to lay hold of real life. He is now more concerned with human character and action than with the "conceits, and pettinesses, and effectations" which abound in his earlier plays. To this period belong such plays as *The Merchant of Venice*, *As You Like It*, *Twelfth Night*, *etc.*

Third Period (1601-1608) has been termed—*Out of the depths.* To this period belong *Macbeth*, *Julius Caesar*, *Hamlet*, *Othello*, *Lear* etc. Dowden writes, "Whatever the causes may have been, the fact seems certain that the poet now ceased to care for tales of mirth and love, for the stir and movement of history, for the pomp of war ; he needed to sound, with his imagination, the depths of the human heart ; to inquire into the darkest and saddest parts of the human life : to study the great mystery of evil.....during this period Shakespeare's genius left the bright surface of the world, and was at work in the very heart and centre of things." Shakespear must have now brooded over the unnatural dissolving of natural bonds, oppression, falsehood, treachery, and ingratitude

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towards benefactors, friends, and relatives, towards those to whom the most sacred duties should be dedicated.

Fourth Period (1608-1613) has been termed—*On the heights.* The plays of this period, *Cymbeline, The Tempest, The Winter's Tale*, have the note of serenity with a recapture of the earlier note of a delight in youth and the loveliness of youthful joy. It is after all a note of a large human-heartedness which springs from sufferings and trials of life.

Q. 4. What portions of *Macbeth* are supposed to be by another hand than Shakespeare's ? Upon what grounds is this supposition based ? [*C. U., 1919*]

Or

'Considerable portions of *Macbeth* were not written by Shakespeare himself.' What grounds can be given for this statement ? Who has been held to be the real author of these portions, and for what reasons ? [*C. U. Hon., 1926*]

Ans. The early text of *Macbeth* is that of the first Folio. The text of the Folio is very unsatisfactory, and it is supposed that it has been taken from a stage-version of the play. The original play might have been condensed for theatrical purpose by some other hand, and the text must have suffered in this process. It has been conjectured that Middleton, who wrote, for the Kings's Company between 1615 and 1624, was the man employed to condense the work. That the play has been rehandled is now admitted, but to what extent and by whom cannot be satisfactorily answered. The following is the list of the passages that have been considered to be spurious :

(*i*) Act I, Scene I (the whole scene).
(*ii*) Act I, Scene II (the whole scene).
(*iii*) Act I, Scene III (The first 37 lines).
(*iv*) Act II, Scene III (Porter's scene).
(*v*) Act III Scene IV (the whole scene).
(*vi*) Act IV, Scene I (lines 39-47, 125-132).
(*vii*) Act IV, Scene III (The *King's Evil* scene).
(*viii*) Act V, Scene VII (last 40 lines).

These passages may be critically examined to find out how far the critics are justified in rejecting them as spurious.

(1) As regards Act I, Scene i, Seymour writes, "The witches here seem to be introduced for no other purpose than to tell us that they are to meet again ; and as I cannot discover any advantage resulting from such anticipation, but, on the contrary think at injurious, I conclude the scene is not genuine." Cunnigham is also of the same opinion. He says, "No dramatic interest or object is gained by its introduction. The dignity and impressive-

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ness of the opening tragedy is fully secured by the sudden appearance of the weired sisters at Act I, scene III, line 39. The references to Graymalkin and Paddock are simply 'conveyed' from the great scene, Act IV ; and scene i ; and of the quoted line 11, 'fair is foul, and foul is fair' merely reproduces and distorts the opening remark of Macbeth in Act V, scene iii, line 31." But as Coleridge points out, this scene strikes the key-note of the character of the whole drama. So there seems to be little sense in rejecting this scene.

(2) The Sergeant scene (Act I, scene ii). With regard to this the Clarendon Press Editors remark. "Making all allowance for corruption of texts, the slovenly metre is not like Shakespeare's work, even when he is most careless. The bombastic phraseology of the sergeant is not like Shakespeare's language, even when he is most careless. The bombastic phraseology of the sergeant is not like Shakespeare's language, even when he is most bombastic ; what is said of the thane of Cawdor in line 54-55, is inconsistent with what follows in scene iii, lines 72, 73 and 112. We may add that Shakespeare's good sense would hardly have tolerated the absurdity of sending a severely wounded soldier to carry the news of victory."

What is called the slovenly metre seems to be quite appropriate to the repaid and excited narration of battle. As regards the bambastic phraseology, some think that there is in this scene "a profusion of Shakespearean touches." As regards the third point, Macbeth's statement may have been a piece of affected ignorance to test the witches. Verity gives the following reasons for considering the scene genuine.

(*a*) Macbeth's greatness as a soldier is seen and this greatness makes the tragedy of his fall so much more beautiful.

(*b*) Again the services in the campaign bring him a rich reward at the hands of 'gracious' Duncan ; hence the blackness of his ingratitude !

(*c*) This very reward becomes, by his previous evil meditation, an impulse towards the crime.

(d) Macbeth's victory is followed by the investiture of Malcolm as heir-apparent—a step which forces Macbeth's hand.

(3) In this scene (Act I, scene iii) we see the witches for the second time. They appear now in their true character of motiveless malignity. The language and metre used are too conventional for witches' scene in Elizabethan plays to be objected to.

(4) The Porter's scene (Act II, scene iii), Coleridge thinks that the porter's part is written for the groundlings by some other hand, the style and the coarseness of speech seeming to support this view. The Clarendon Press Editors consider this scene to have been interpolated by Middleton and think it to be "strangely

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out of place amidst the tragic horrors which surround it." But as Prof. Hales points out, the Porter's scene is an integral part of the play ; it is necessary as a relief to the surrounding horror, and also according to the law of contrast ; the speech is dramatically relevant ; its style and language are Shakespearean.

(5) and (6) Hecate Passages (Act III, scene v, Act IV, scene i—lines 39-47. 125-132). This portion has been supposed to be written by Middleton. The critics compare Middleton's *Witch* and point out that Middleton and Shakespeare have many points in common. As for the two songs, the stage directions of which only appear in Shakespeare's play, they come from Middleton. It may be argued that besides these two songs, which seem to have been inserted in the play, Middleton had nothing to do with the Hecate passages. The witches in these two plays are far from being alike.

(7) The King's evil scene (Act IV, scene iii). In this scene a personal compliment is paid to James I, and it is on this ground that some critics consider it to be an interpolation. When there is an allusion to the crowning of James I in the play, which is not considered to be irrelevant, there is no reason to think that the King's evil scene is un-Shakespearean.

(8) The last scene. The last 40 lines of the last scene have been objected to on the ground of the double ; and therefore the defective stage direction of the Folio ('Exeunt fighting, Alarums, and 'Enter fighting, and Macbeth slain), and the inappropriate phrases uttered by Malcom—'fiend like queen.' All the trouble is caused by Malcolm's utterance. The 'fiend-like queen' does not sound harsh in the mouth of Malcolm, for it is through the instigation and contriving of Lady Macbeth that Malcolm lost his father.

Q. 5. Write a note on the period of Scottish history to which *Macbeth* refers.

Ans. Holinshed's *Chronicle* cannot be taken as authentic history. Holinshed himself invented things and mixed up fiction with truth. It is no use, therefore, going to Holinshed for the actual history of the period.

It is possible to glean the following historical facts. In 1035 Malcolm II was succeeded by his grandson Duncan. Duncan married a daughter of the Northumbrian Earl, Siward, and ruled till 1040. Now there was the rebellion of Torfin, another grandson of Malcolm's ; this seems to have been worked up into the revolt of Macdonwald, and Duncan marched against him. In the battle that followed, Duncan was defeated and killed, at Bathgownan near Elgin by his own general Macbeth, who had teacherously gone over to the side of Torfin.

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Now Macbeth had motives for revenge. His father Finlegh or Finlay had been slain in a conflict with Malcolm II, in 1020. Macbeth married Grouch the widow of Gilcomagain, and granddaughter of Kenneth IV. Now Kenneth IV was slain at the battle of Monivaired by Malcolm II. Gilcomgain burnt in his castle with fifty of his friends. The only brother of Grouch was also slain by Malcolm's orders. The series of events supply Macbeth with the motive of revenge.

Macbeth reigned for seventeen years from 1040-57. He seems to have been a popular king. Siward, Earl of Northumbria, took up the cause of Duncan's son, Malcolm III, his grandson (Duncan's wife being Siward's daughter), and attacked Macbeth in 1054. Macbeth, however, successfully repelled the attack. In 1057 he fell in the battle of Lumphanan. He was succeeded by Malcom Cammore (1058-1093), who had spent his youth at the court of Edward, the Confessor, of England. These are mainly the historical facts, concerned with Macbeth. The invasion of Sweno, King of Norway, has no historical basis ; Banquo and Fleance are not historical figure. Nor is there any reference to Macduff in history.

Q. 6. What is the kind of atmosphere created in *Macbeth* ?

Ans. A Shakespearean tragedy, as a rule, has a special tone or atmosphere of its own. The effect of atmosphere seems to be specially marked in *Macbeth.* The desolation of the blasted heath the design of the witches, the guilt of the hero's soul, the darkness of the night—all contribute to the atmosphere of *Macbeth.* Darkness, or we may say rather blackness, broods over this tragedy. It may be noted that all the important scene, take place either at night or in some dark spot. For example, the vision of the dagger, the murder of Duncan, the murder of Banquo, the sleep-walking of Lady Macbeth are all night scenes. The witches are 'black and midnight hags,' who receive Macbeth in a cavern. The blackness of night fills Macbeth's heart with terror. Then the exquisite touch about the hour when Banquo is murdered, is noteworthy : the faint glimmerings of the western sky at twilight seems to be menacing; it is the hour when a traveller hastens to reach safely, and it is the hour when Banquo rides homeward to meet his assassins. Macbeth bids the stars hide their fires so that his 'black' desires may be concealed ; Lady Macbeth calls on thick night to come palled in the dunnest smoke of hell. After the murder of Duncan when the day breaks, its light is 'strangled,' and darkness entombs the face of the earth. In the whole drama, the sun seems to shine only twice first, when Duncan arrives at Macbeth's castle, and looks at the swallows, flitting round the castle ; and afterwards at the close when the avenging army gathers to rid the earth of the tyrant. Lady Macbeth has a dread of darkness ; 'she has light by her continually.'

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Darkness seems to be the predominating element in the conception of the tragedy of Macbeth.

Q. 7. Trace the evolution of the actions marking the climax and showing the general movement of the drama. Show how the principle of retribution is asserted. [*C. U., Hon., 1909*].

Ans. *Macbeth* is the shortest of Shakespeare's plays. The sweep and rush of the action carry us on with little pause to the tragic end of Macbeth's carrier. The play opens with the meeting of the witches on a wild heath. They know of a battle that is going on, and appear to be interested in Macbeth who, as we see afterwards, distinguishes himself in the battle. Before Macbeth meets the King, he meets the witches on the wild health, and learns that he shall be king, and also that he is already thane of Cowdor—a fact which is soon confirmed by the message of the king. But Macbeth is more concerned now with that other prophecy. His imagination tops, only casually, as it appears, with the thought of murder from which he palpably shrinks. Then he meets the King, and the King showers praises upon him. But the King's declaration of his eldest son Malcolm as the Prince of Cumberland the heir to the throne, comes as a stab to Macbeth's heart. The thought of murder occurs to him again, only for a moment. The King invites himself as his guest. In the meantime Macbeth has despatched a letter to Lady Macbeth. Lady Macbeth at once catches up with the suggestion of the witches :

"Glamis thou art, and Cawdor ; and shalt be.

What thou art promised."

But to Lady Macbeth the only way to it is the murder of the King. Next day Duncan arrives at Inverness, Macbeth's residence. Thus accident favours the design of Lady Macbeth. To the supernatural soliciting to which Macbeth has been subjected is now added the human soliciting of Lady Macbeth. The King is murdered. Accident again favours Macbeth and Lady Macbeth. The flight of Malcolm and Donalbain enables them to shift the blame of the murder to them. The prophecy of the witches is fulfilled. But Macbeth does not feel his position very secure. There is Banquo, and the witches have prophesied that his children shall be kings. Until Banquo and his son Fleance are deposed of, he cannot have any peace of mind. Banquo is murdered by hired assassins, but his son escapes. The murder of Banquo is the climax of the play. Up till now Macbeth's career has been one of steady rise.

From this point begins his fall. His fear and mistrust return with still greater force. Now it is Macduff who gives him sleepless night. But before he can get Macduff into his clutches, he escapes to England. His castle is stormed and his wife and children are

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put to the sword. The slaughter of Macduff's wife and children marks the most abject degradation of Macbeth's character and also the measure of the witches' influence upon him. In the meantime Macduff has not been inactive. He has beaten himself to Malcolm, now living at the English court, and passionately appeals to him to come and save Scotland. The news of the murder of his wife and children is brought to him there by Ross. His patriotic motive is now reinforced by his private wrongs. Soon they set forth against Scotland with ten thousand men under the able leadership of Old Siward. Macbeth's doom draws nearer. Fallen as he is upon evil days, his thanes begin to desert him. He can only build his hopes on the prophecies of the witches. He has nothing to fear until Birnam wood comes to Dunsinane, nor is he to fear any man born of woman. At last these prophecies prove to be broken reeds. Birnam wood does come to Dunsinane, and Macduff the destined avenger of Macbeth, turns out to be one untimely ripped from his mother's womb, and, therefore, answering to the description of one not born of woman. It is in the fitness of things that through Macduff the doom falls upon Macbeth for the retribution of his private wrongs becomes a sacred duty to him apart from his patriotic motive to restore Scotland to its rightful kings.

Q. 8. Compare Macbeth with Hamlet and Richard III.

Ans. Macbeth is pre-eminently a man of action, a born soldier, Hamlet is a man of abstract speculation and has natural aversion to action. A sacred duty is imposed on Hamlet ; he is called upon to avenge his father's murder. The summons comes from his father's ghost. At first he wastes much of time in disbelieving the ghost ; he is not certain whether it is not an evil spirit. Secondly he seems to have been hypersensitive and has a natural shrinking from bloodshed. If not actually a dreamer, he would often retire into a world of fantasy When he makes sure that his uncle is the murderer of his father, he has then little chance of avenging his father's murder. He is shipped off to England, but he happens to return, and then the revenge is accomplished in an accidental and spasmodic action. At first sight there seems to be little affinity between-Macbeth and Hamlet. Macbeth is not given to vacillation like Hamlet, but he is dominated by imagination. Now in both Macbeth and Hamlet there seems to be an idealistic element. It should be noted that Macbeth is not a born criminal, but he surrenders easily to the influence of the witches and the no-less dominating influence of his wife. Between the witches and his wife he is hurried on from crime to crime. His retribution comes through his imagination. It is true that Hamlet, in similar circumstances. would not have become a criminal. Macbeth's ambition leads him to crime. But Hamlet is a scholar and profound thinker, Hamlet ruins himself by his procrastination, supposing that it is his sacred duty to avenge his father's murder. Macbeth ruins

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himself by his ambition. Then again through crime Macbeth suffers a degradation, and his guilty conscience ever dogs him like an avenging deity. Hamlet is spared the pangs of remorse expecting the sense that he has let the chances go by, and has done nothing till the end to fulfil his sacred task. But there seems to be some nearness in the mental make-up between the two. It has been noted above that speculative interest dominates Hamlet. If we compare Macbeth's first monolgue :

"If it were done when 't is done, then 't were well
It were done quickly ; if assassination.
Could trammel up the consequence, and catch
With his surcease success : that but this blow
Might be the be-all and the end-all here,
But here, upon this bank and shoal of time,
We'd jump the life to come. But in these cases
We still have judgment here."

Macbeth seems to be drawn to speculation. We may further note another point of resemblance : Both Hamlet and Macbeth are guided to action by supernatural influences. Macbeth, impelled by his ambition, readily acts upon the suggestions of the witches. Hamlet being of a speculative nature, postpones the carrying out of the task, imposed on him by his father's ghost.

Macbeth and Richard III have often been compared. Richard III overtops Macbeth in villainies. The circumstances of Richard III may partially extenuate his wickedness. He was born a cripple and his physical infirmity ever weighed on his mind. He seemed to have suffered from an inferiority complex. Naturally he wanted to avenge himself upon the world. Like, Macbeth, he is also fired by ambition. While Macbeth is goaded on from crime to crime by the nemesis of an outraged conscience, Richard III seems to take an artistic delight in crime, and simply reveals in it. But Macbeth is made of finer stuff than Richard III. There is nothing of Macbeth's imagination in Richard III. Richard II is after all an abnormal type.

Q. Discuss the relation of Macbeth to "The Witch" of Middleton.

Ans. In Act III, scene v, we have the direction 'Music and a song within : Come away, come', etc., and in Act IV,, scene i, Music and a song, Black Spirits, etc. These songs occur in *The Witch*. From this it has been inferred that *The Witch* had preceded Macbeth, and that Shakespeare was indebted to it, not only for the songs but for the general idea of the character of the witches. There is no evidence to show that *The Witch* came either before or after *Macbeth*, or that if Shakespeare borrowed the songs, there was collaboration. It might well be that the songs had been borrowed by both from one common source. Further it may be

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pointed out that the witches in Shakespeare are entirely different from those in Middleton. Shakespeare has idealised and sublimated the stuff of popular superstition. Hecate in Middleton has a son, a low buffoon ; the witches of Shakespeare have neither a child of their own, nor seem to be descended from any parent. They are aberrations from nature ; we do not know whence they have sprung, nor whether they have a beginning or an end. As they are without human passions, so they seem to be without human relations. They come with thunder and lightning and vanish to airy music. This is all we know of them. Except Hecate, they have no names, which heightens their mysteriousness. The names and some of the properties, which Middleton has given to his witches make them ludicrous and grotesque. The Weird Sisters are more poetic and sublime creations.

Q. 10. Did Shakespeare ever visit Scotland ? Discuss with reference to *Macbeth.*

Ans. *Macbeth* abounds in local touches, and it has been inferred that Shakespeare must have been to Scotland, and the touches of local colour are scribed to personal observation. It is true that in November, 1599, a company of English actors under the leadership of Lawrence Fletcher visited Scotland, and had a tremendous welcome from the King. Fletcher repeated his visit in October, 1601. But there is no evidence to show that Shakespeare accompanied Fletcher. It is better to assume that by his intuitive imagination Shakespeare has been able to render the true spirit and atmosphere of Scotland in the play. For example, Shakespeare correctly describes the climate of Inverness as 'nimble' but 'sweet' ; he gives a proper impression of the wildness of a Highland heath. Now Shakespeare might have got hold of these details from stray travellers and his imagination worked them up into the atmosphere of the play. It might at the same time be quite probable that Shakespeare has visited Scotland.

Raleigh writes "From the evidence of the plays it has been argued that Shakespeare must have travelled. Doubtless he often went with his company of the actors on their summer tours among provincial towns. It is unlikely that he ever crossed the channel, and visited Scotland. Certain of his allusions in *Hamlet* and the Italian plays, show some detailed local knowledge of Elsinor and of Italy. The name of Gobbo, for instance, which he gives to the clown in *The Merchant of Venice.* is the name of an ancient stone-figure in the market-place of the city ; and when he speaks of the common ferry as "the trancet,' the word seems to be a mistaken or misprinted adaptation of the Italian word "traghetto.'. But this is nothing. Venice in her ancient glory attracted crowds of travellers ; and, without troubling himself to put a question. Shakespeare must have heard innumerable stories from that centre of life and com-

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merce. In the age of cheap printed information we are apt to forget how large a part of his knowledge must have been gathered in talk, there was free trade. He must have often listened to tales like those told by Othello, of the wonders of the New World. He must often have seen the affected traveller described in *King John* dallying with his tooth-pick at a great man's table, full of elaborate compliment.

"And talking of the Alps and Appennines,
The Pyrenean and the river Po."

The knowledge that he gained from such a talk, if it were sometimes curious, was neither systematic nor accurate ; this is supplemented and transfigured by imagination.

Q. 11. "In *Macbeth* almost every detail is steeped in the peculiar genius of Celtic Scotland." Discuss.

Ans. Shakespeare seems to have created an alien and exotic atmosphere in *Macbeth*. He carries the action of the play into a dim, but rather a barbaric age. In any other hand the murder of Duncan by Macbeth would have been only a grotesque crime, unrelieved by remorse. But Shakespeare seems to have shown a delicate insight in dealing with Macbeth's crime. While we are made conscious of the appropriate background in the popular superstition and imagination of the people, there is the touch of subtle grace in the haunting remorse of Macbeth.

In fact it is not meant to be a realistic picture of the distant age in Scotland. Shakespeare has been able to catch the very soul of the dim age, and rendered in poetry and fragrance of local scenery. We may instance the desolate heath where witches meet, and settle the fates of human creatures, the lonely castle, where, at dead of night, a murderer may stealthily creep to his victim ; the cerie atmosphere, called up in the hoarse croak of the raven and screech of the owl ; the fatal bell-man, foretelling the impending doom All these details call up to our imagination the dim, wild age in Scotland. Shakespeare has transported into his play all the mysticism and elemental passion of the highland story. He has invested it with a profound moral significanee.

Q. 12. The gloom of Macbeth is often relieved by picturesque references to external nature. Mention the principle, showing their connection with the action of the Play. [*C. U. Hon., 1927.*]

Ans. It is on the principle of contrast that these glimpses into nature are evoked. Macbeth's crime acquires a pathetic significance, as it is brought into relation with these references to external nature. In Act II, scene ii, after the murder is done, Macbeth looks on the blood on his hand and, with a shuddering within cries out :

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"What hands are here ? Ha ! they pluck out mine eyes.
Will all great Neptune's occean wash this blood.
Clean from my hand ? No ; this hand will rather
The multitudinous seas incarnadine,
Making the green one red."

Here Macbeth disburdens himself ; imagination and passion enter into this piece of apostrophe.

We may quote a passage in which dark Nature is represented as being in sympathy with the dark design of his heart :

"Come, seeling night,
Scraf up the tender eye of pitiful day,
And with thy bloody and invisible hand
Cancel and tear to pieces that great bond
Which keeps me pale ! Light thickens ; and the crow
Makes wing to the rooky wood."

The effect upon his mind of the apparition of Banquo is associated with a happy poetic image :

"Can such things be,
And overcome us like a summer's cloud,
Without our special wonder ?"

How exquisite is the phrase in which he expresses the pathos and sadness of declining age !

"My way of life ;
Is fallen into the sear, the yellow leaf."

It is the most poetical and opposite reference to external Nature that occurs in whole of the play, and it is uttered in connection with anguish and disappointment with Macbeth feels at the desertion of his thanes, almoit in a body.

Q. 13. *Macbeth* illustrates certain moral and psychological truths. Point them out, and refer to passages in support.
[*C. U., Hons., 1927*]

Ans. As Dowden puts it. "The theme of the drama is the gradual ruin through yielding to evil within and without, of a man, who though from the first tainted by base and ambitious thoughts, yet possessed elements in his nature of possible honour and loyalty." In the beginning Macbeth seems to have a moral scruple, rather a shrinking from actual crime. There seems to have been a sort of contradiction in his character. When Lady Macbeth says that he would not wrongly win the crown, she seems to sum up his character well. It may be said that Macbeth has a sense of honour and a delicate sensibility in place of a strict, and censorious conscience. It is not his conscience, but his sense of honour which forbids the murder of Duncan.

"He's here in double trust ;
First, as I am his kinsman and his subject,

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Strong both against the deed ; then, as his host,
Who should against his murderer shut door,
Not bear the knife myself."

To these elements we must add his sickening horror of blood.

The first crime coarsens and hardens his nature, and he has much less shrinking at the time of the second murder. The crime also breeds in him fear and mistrust which he can allay only by removing those whom he suspects. Crime always carries with it its punishment, and the punishment of Macbeth's crime begins in the degradation of his nature, in his disillusionment, in his haunting fear and mistrust, though his doom is still postponed until the full cycle is run. His mental anguish and unrest, consequent upon his first crime, are best expressed in these words :

"But let the frame of things disjoint, both
the worlds suffer,
Ere we will eat our meal in fear, and sleep
In the affliction of these terrible dreams
That shake us nightly ; better be with the dead
Whom we, to gain our peace, have sent to peace
Than on the torture of the mind to lie
In restless ecstasy, Duncan in his grave ;
After life's fitful fever he sleeps well."

The unrest of his mind impels him to add crime to crime with the result that his nature becomes more and more abased and degraded until we see him revelling in blood. It illustrates the psychological truth. "Things had begun make strong themselves by ill." He surrenders more and more to the influence of the witches. Macbeth's character is the best study of the devastating effect of crime upon human nature and human soul. The profound sense of weariness which he expresses in his speech occasioned by Lady Macbeth's death, marks the total eclipse of his soul. On the speech Coleridge remarks, "Alas for Macbeth's ! Now all his in ward with him ; he has no more prudential prospective reasonings. His wife, the only being who would have had any seat in his affection, dies ; he puts on despondency, the final heart-armour of the wretched, and would fain think everything shadowy and substantial as indeed all things are to those who cannot regard them as symbol of goodness." The doom that at the falls upon him is but a visible execution of the decree of moral justice.

The play is concerned with crime and retribution. Both Macbeth and Lady Macbeth suffer, each after the natue of the guilt. It is the working out of the retribution that the moral and psychological truths are illustrated. The retribution shapes differently for Lady Macbeth. Her unsexing of herself is a supreme effort of will. Her disillusionment comes perhaps quicker than Macbeth's. We know little of her inward struggle until we see her anguish and remorse break forth in the

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sleep-walking scene. 'It is true that she crops more and more out of the life of Macbeth after her participation in his first crime.' Yet she suffers perhaps more than Macbeth, this single crime sticking to her conscience. In the sleep-walking scene, she is a prey to avenging conscience, and to womanly horror for her deed. And finally, in another rush of unregulated impulse, she lays violent hands on herself. Her retribution takes the form of somnambulism. Gervinus writes : "According to the poet, poetic physiology and psychology, her unnaturally strained conscience and dissimulation avenge themselves during sleep, and the somnambulist, self-betraying, acts, as it were, all the secret guilty scenes over again."

The play also abounds in many minor psychological truths. Here is an instance.

"That memory, the warder of the brain,
Shall be a fume, and the receipt of reason
A limbec only."

It is a statement of the true conception of the functions of memory and reason, and of their inter-relation.

When Macbeth proceeds to the sleeping chamber of Duncan led on by the phantom of dagger, he says :

"Words to the heat of deeds too cool breath gives."

It points to the truth that idle speculation, in which Macbeth seems to be engaged at the moment, often paralyses the power of action. Lady Macbeth well expresses what the result of Macbeth's constant brooding will be :

"These deeds must not be thought
After these ways ; so, it will make us mad."

Macbeth sees that his fear and unrest are the result of being a novice in crime, and states this important truth thus :

"My strange and self-abuse
In the initate fear, that wants hard use."

It shows how repeated familiarity with crime leads to callousness.

Q. 14. What is dramatic irony ? Illustrate it from *Macbeth.*

Ans. Dramatic irony arises from the double meaning of a speech or action on the stage. It conveys one meaning to the spectators who are in the know,' and another to the character or characters who are in possession of certain facts influencing the destinies of the characters. The spectators can see what is going to happen in the light of the facts or catch the drift and movement of action.

Sometimes the irony is verbal ; for example, when the character utters something of which the deeper meaning flashes on the

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audience, but is unthought of by the character himself. Sometimes it arises from the situation. Subtlest irony, undreamt of by the speaker himself, marks Duncan's speech at the point of Macbeth's entrance.

"There's no art
To find the mind's construction in the face,
He was a gentleman on whom I built
An absolute trust."

Duncan never suspects that the remark applies to Macbeth as well. Macbeth is to betray his trust in a way, which the spectators partly apprehend and see. The face is no index to the heart.

Scene vi is conceived in a spirit of irony. Macbeth's castle is to be the scene of the most dastardly murder. Duncan's rapturous admiration of the sight of the castle sounds the note of the most tragic irony.

"This castle hath a pleasant seat, the air
Nimbly and sweetly it recommends itself
Unto our gentle senses."

Duncan is blissfully ignorant that this castle with it whole-air, gracious and inviting looks, is to be the gateway to death.

Banquo's exclamation of 'Our honourable hostess" at the sight of Lady Macbeth, and his repetition of the word "hostess" are touched with subtle irony, for we know that all the time Lady Macbeth has been harbouring murderous thoughts in her bosom. When Lady Macbeth cries,

"A little water clears us of this deed,
How easy is it then."

We know it is not so easy, any sleep-walking scene later takes back to this unconscious remark. In her sleep-walking scene, she seems to see the blood spot striking to her fingers :

"Out damned spot ; out, I say !"

Again she cries :

"Here's the smell of the blood still ; all the perfumes
of Arabia will not sweeten this little hand
Oh ! oh, oh !"

Apart, from these subtle ironies, cropping up here and there, there is a broader kind of irony pervading the whole play. This may be termed the irony of fate or circumstances The predictions of the witches, couched in ambiguous words, are first fulfilled to the entire satisfaction of Macbeth, but finally he is betrayed to his fall and destruction. The irony consists in the failure of Macbeth's hopes and ambitions while these predictions have a literary fulfilment. The irony comes crushing home to Macbeth himself at last.

"And be these juggling fiends no more believed,
That patter with us in a double sense.

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That keep the word of our promise to our ear,
And break it to our hope."

Q. 15. What is "dramatic relief?" How has it been used in *Macbeth* ?

Ans. Tragedy, when the climax approaches or when the denouement follows upon the climax, produces an emotional tension —an aching sense of the complex web of events, with which human joys and sorrows are inextricably entangled. Shakespeare has ever been attentive to the psychological truth that when the spectator's mind has been too much agitated and distracted by the steering dramatic events, which spell woe to human destiny, a relief or relaxation needs to be provided—the tension should be brought down to a lower pitch. This psychological law, the importance of which Shakespeare never forgets, leads him to intermingle comic and serious elements in a tragedy—a practice, which is condemned by the traditions of the Greek dramatist. It has however, been now accepted as a technique of the "romantic" drama, since Shakespeare sets the seal of his genius on it. This variation of serious elements is done in several ways. Shakespeare will sometimes introduce a fool who (as in *King Lear*) indirectly comments on the tragic event, subtly conveying the underlying pathetic significance (as in *King Lear* the ingratitude of children shaking and unbalancing King Lear's mind, or as in *Hamlet* the clown in the graveyard scene relieving and also intensifying the tragic issues of the play). Sometimes Shakespeare introduces a scene, set in a lower key, where the mind can rest and pause a while. We may take the innocent prattle of Lady Macduff and her son in Act IV, scene vi, which seems to be charged with the most fateful significance for immediately afterwards the murderers appear and kill both mother and son. The point is that whenever there is a prolonged mental strain, there follows invariably a relief scene in Shakespeare. The notable instance in *Macbeth* is the Porter scene (Act II, scene ii), following upon the shuddering horror, confusion and distraction of Duncan's murder. The "devil-portering" of the porter, gives relief to our agonized feeling and relaxes the tragic tension—and finally it brings the horrible murder into the light of broad day. Then again when Duncan and Banquo contemplated the serene majesty and repose of Macbeth's castle on their arrival there, the tumult of battle scene, of which there are echoes in the opening of drama, seems to have left far behind, and bloody thought raging in Macbeth's bosom seem to hush into silence.

Q. 16. "Shakespeare has wonderfully relieved the horrors of the play with poetry and repose." Discuss and illustrate.

Ans. See Answers to Questions 12 and 15.

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Q. 17. What is meant by "Poetic Justice." How far is it illustrated in the plays ?

Ans. Poetic Justice may be defined as a proper distribution of weal and woe in proportion to the merits of the agents. "Such poetic justice", Bradley, however, remarks, "is inflagrant contradiction with the facts of life, and it is absent from Shakespeare's picture of life."

It is true that Shakespeare does not, as a rule, observe the conditions of poetic Justice. It seems to imply an arbitrary and also artificial dispension of happiness and sorrow. We may take *King Lear*. What happens to Cordelia, Lear's youngest daughter, who if anybody in the world, most deserved happiness, but dies in prison for coming all the way from France to devote herself to the care of her brain-sick father. According to Bradley, Shakespeare believes in a moral order of the universe—a moral order that is stern and unrelenting. Crimes disturb this moral order, and the doers of wicked deeds cannot escape retribution because the moral order works inevitably, and must readjust itself when it has once been disturbed. So there is justice, but it is not what is known to be poetic justice, concerned as it is, according to the pious belief of the religious-minded among the multitude, with the distribution of prosperity and adversity in exact proportion to the merits of the agents. In Shakespeare, the distribution is not proportional. Shakespeare seems to recognise "a divinity that shapes our ends, rough-hew then how we will." It is what Bradley calls the moral order of the universe, the operation and effect of which are not to be calculated or forecast in terms of human desires and passions. *Macbeth* illustrates this, though some critics say that the punishment of Macbeth satisfies the demands of poetic justice. After all it is a difference of terms, if the proper implication of all that happens in the tragedy is fully realized. The truth is that Macbeth leaves on most readers a profound impression of misery of a guilty conscience and retribution of crime. And the strength of this impression is one of the reasons why the tragedy is admired by readers who shrink from *Othello* and are made unhappy by *Lear*.

Q. 18. *Macbeth* has been termed a tragedy of ambition. Discuss.

Ans. An attempt to sum up any great work of art in a single formula is rather misleading, for a great work of art defies such analysis. It proves to be either too narrow or too wide, and sometime gives a positively wrong impression. But the summing up of *Macbeth* as a tragedy of ambition may not be misleading. Ambition is the key-note to the character of Macbeth. Lady Macbeth may sometimes appear to be more fired by ambition than Macbeth, but it ought not to be forgotten that Lady Macbeth is ambitious for

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the sake of her husband. We may say that ambition is subordinate to Lady Macbeth's love for her husband. We may take the concluding lines of Macbeth's soliloquy in Act I, scene vii, as conclusive on the point.

"I have no spur
To prick the sides of my intent, but only
Vaulting ambition, which o'erleaps itself
And falls on the other."

The main spring of action in Macbeth is ambition. It is ambition in the mind of a man who finally dissociates moral principles from his action, and even suppresses his imagination and sensibilities. Ambition is the cause of his crime and degradation. Of course if Macbeth had been left to himself, he might have shrunk from crime and kept a clean man. On the one hand is the supernatural soliciting of the witches, who exercise a subtle fascination on Macbeth ; on the other, is Lady Macbeth's tongue lashing him with desperate valour. Macbeth seems to be pushed on by blind forces. This cannot be any excuse for crime. The very conception of tragedy presupposes a conscious and voluntary agent, who has a will of his own, not to be swayed by every gust of passion, or to be enslaved by subordination to the will of another. Does not Macbeth allow himself to be egged on the crime by Lady Macbeth ? But there is no denying the fact that the tragedy turns on ambition. Macbeth could have easily resisted the solicitation of the witches and the fatal persuation of Lady Macbeth's tongue if he had not been ruled by ambition. Ambition finally blinded him. We may contrast him with Banquo ; Banquo too was solicited by the witches, but he repressed his ambition, and followed the path of virtue. Ambition works a havoc in the peace and happiness of Macbeth ; ambition which is entertained by Lady Macbeth for the sake of her husband imposes too terrible strain upon her—and she finally collapses.

Q. 19. *Macbeth* has been termed the tragedy of the imagination. Discuss.

Ans. Snider describes *Macbeth* as the tragedy of the imagination. Imagination is both the strength and weakness of Macbeth. Macbeth possesses elements of greatness—imagination, sensibilities, passion, physical courage, dignity of bearing etc. But all these good qualities are neutralized by ambition. Ambition in its normal condition would have been all right, but it exceeded all limits. Perhaps his imagination and sensibilities, which hardly differ from those of a poet, might have exercised a moderating influence on his ambition, but there were stronger forces, acting upon him, and finally swept him off his feet. His imagination and sensibilities were paralysed. But it ought to be noted how the imagination was an instrument of torture before the commission of the crime. The

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imagination begins to work in him when he hears the prophecies of the witches. Macbeth's self-abstraction does not escape Banquo's eye :

"My noble partner
You greet with present grace, and great prediction
Of noble having and of royal hope
That he seems rapt withal."

Macbeth himself recognises the unsetting effect of his imagination.

"I am thane of Cawdor :
If good, why do I yield to that suggestion
Whose horrid image both unfix my hair,
And make my seated heart knock at my ribs,
Against the use of nature ?"

Again when he contemplates the crime in his soliloquy in Act I, scene vii, he envisages the consequences ; he does not argue out the matter like a cool-headed logician, but like a poet to whose mind comes crowding image after image. We may just quote a few instances :

(1) "……that but this blow
Might be the be-all and the end-all here,
But there, upon this bank and shoal of time,
We'd jump the Life to come"

(2) "……this even-handed justice
Commends the ingredients of our position'd chalice
To our own lips."

(3) "And pity, like a naked new-born babe,
Striding the blast, or heaven's cherubin hors'd
Upon the sightless couriers of the air
Shall blow the horrid deed in every eye,
That tears shall drown the wind."

The soliloquy is of imagination all compact. We may take the dagger-scene :

"Is this a dagger which I see before me,
The handle toward my hand ? Come let me clutch thee :
I have thee not, and yet I see thee still.
Art thou not, fatal vision, sensible
To feeling as to sight ? or art thou but
A dagger of the might, false creation,
Proceeding from the heat-oppressed brain."

Well, it is a hallucination, but it is the work of Macbeth's perfervid imagination. With his imagination are associated his moral sensibilities, and he is plagued by both, his doom is wrought through them. If he had been a born criminal, callous and dull in imagination, he would have bothered little either before or after the murder, and he might have slept in peace after the murder.

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Q. 20. "Macbeth was a poet with his brain and villian with his heart."—(Sir Henry Irving). Discuss.

Ans. See Answer to Question 19.

Macbeth's speeches are characterised by a passionate imagination. He thinks and speaks in images and metaphors—the language of a poet, particularly on his soliloquies. When he dwells upon the contemplated crime, his imagination takes fire. It can be illustrated from his soliloquy (Act I, scene vi), the dagger-scene (concluding scene i Act II), from any of his speeches. In fact all his speeches—and he is always made to speak under a stress of emotion—are poetic effusions ; they are "simple, sensuous, and impassioned ?" We may give a few examples :

(1) "No, this my hand will rather
The multitudinous seas incarnardine.
Making the green on red."—(Act II, scene ii).

(2) "Duncan is his grave ;
After life's fitful fever he sleeps well."
—(Act III, scene ii).

(3) "Ltght thickens, and the crows
Makes wing to the rooky wood ;
Good things of day began to droop and drowse,
While night's black agents to their preys do rouse."
—(Act III, scene ii).

(4) "My way of life
Is fall'n into the sear, the yellow leaf.,'
—(Act V, scene iii).

Macbeth is dominated and tyrannised by the imagination "Before, during and after the murder, this imagination, blown into a white heat by the intense passion of the hour is so alive and powerful that it doubles the horror of the murder. It lifts out of vulgar assassination into the archetype of all terrible, soul-shaking murders. It flies from heaven to earth and down to hell. It sees an air-drawn dagger, 'a metaphysical dagger of the working soul,' pointing him to Duncan's chamber. It blackens all Nature with his thought. It drags the remotest things to increase the terror of the present—Hecate, Tarquin whose strides towards his design are like those of withered murder with her sentinel the wolf. In the very midst of his slaughter, he hears a voice, sleep no more ! Macbeth hath murdered sleep," and at the word his imagination takes fire, and runs away from the horror of the moment into the poetry of sleep—strange island of peaceful imagination in this sea of murder :

".....the innocent sleep,
Sleep that knits up the ravell'd sleeve of eare,

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The death of each day's life, sore labour's bath,
Balm of hurt minds, great nature's second course,
Chief nourisher in life's feast."

These speaks the natural poet.

To say that Macbeth is "a villain with a heart" is to be too hard on him. It is overlooked that with his imagination go his moral sensibilities. and that his moral sensibilities were later deadened by crime. A villain with a heart cannot certainly possess the imagination. It is true that when Macbeth heaps crime on crime, his imagination and his moral sensibilities are atrophied—it is then that he becomes a villain. The tragedy could have no interest if it were not concerned with the moral and spiritual degradation of Macbeth ; through crime the tragedy would have been meaningless if it started with a hero, who is already a villain.

Q. 21. It is said that the character of Macbeth is "instinct with imagination." Illustrate this by reference to his thoughts and moods and language and by contrast with the other characters of the play.

[*C. U., Hon., 1909*].

Ans. See Answers to Questions 19 and 20.

Lady Macbeth has much less of imagination than Macbeth. Macbeth's cry—"Methought I heard a voice cry, "Sleep no more !" —makes no sense to Lady Macbeth. Lady Macbeth naturally asks : "What do you mean ?" Macbeth may also be contrasted with Banquo, who is not troubled by the imagination.

Q. 22. Describe the Witches in (*a*) their visible appearance, (*b*) their influence on man and, (c) their relation to external nature. Compare them with other supernatural beings in Shakespeare.

[*C. U., Hon., 1909*].

Or

Explain the term 'Weird Sisters,' and comment on the part played by the Sisters in the play. [*C. U., Hon., 1926*].

Or

Explain shortly the part played by the Weird Sisters in the notion of the piece. In what respects do they resemble the Witches of popular superstition ? [*C. U., 1919*].

Ans. Reginald Scott's *Discoveries of Witchcraft* (1584) is one of the sources of *Macbeth*. Shakespeare did not reject the popular conception of witches, however he might have idealized it. Scott partly supplied him with the material. First it ought to be noted how Scott describes the witches—'they are women who are commonly old, lame, blear-eyed, pale, foul and full of wrinkles, they are lean and deformed, showing melancholy in their faces, to the horror of all that see them'.

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Now Shakespeare's witches are the same—only their features are heightened by imagination. They are withered, with in attire ; they look not like the inhabitants of the earth, they have choppy fingers, and skinny lips and beards. In respect of their physical appearance they seem to resemble the witches of popular superstition.

In some of the powers, attributed to them, Shakespeare hardly deviates from the popular belief of the day. The fear of the 'evil-eye' was very common among ignorant people. The killing of swine, referred to in the play was the effect of the evil-eye. The evil eye might also do harm to men, and women. The witches could make a man "peak and pine," this they would do by burning a waxen image of the victim before a candle. There was limitation on their power. They could do no harm to one who had not been alienated from God by some misdeed or crime. The sailor's wife, mentioned by the witches, must have been a devout woman, and so the witches could do no more than persecute her husband, but

"Though his bark cannot be lost,
Yet it shall be tempest-tost."

In fact their influence on man is to be estimated in exact proportion to the weakness of the human will, to the propensity of the mind to evil. This shown by the effects of their prophecies on Macbeth and Banquo. They are suggestions of evil—call up the image of murder to Macbeth, they leave Banquo's mind untainted. Macbeth seems to meet the witches half-way ; hence they have so much influence upon Macbeth and so little upon Banquo. Some critics go so far as to say that the witches are the projects of Macbeth's evil thoughts.

The 'witches' powers extend over nature too. They should sail on the sea in a sieve, cockle-shell or egg-shell ; they could raise tempest, cause hail, thunder and lightning, they could sink ships, pull down castles and palaces and work great havoc and desolation (the treasure of nature's garments tumble altogether, even till destruction sickens (Act IV, scene i. lines 59-61). They seem to be a part of the wild and desolate heath ; they are associated with thunder and lightning.

Holinshed uses the term "weird sister," for the 'goddesses of destiny' ; Shakespeare might have retained this term "as a poetical and not unsuitable description of the characters to whom it was applied." Certain aspects of the witches are emphasized by the use of the term. They can "look into the seeds of time, and say which grain will grow," they who seem corporal, can but melt into air, like bubbles of the earth ; they have in them more than mortal knowledge The subtle influence which they exercise upon Macbeth can be explained in view of these aspects which show that they are more than mere witches—they are weird sisters. They

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are creatures existing on a higher plane– "in the elementary poetry of wind and storm."

The witches largely determine the action of the play. Macbeth who is predisposed to evil, readily falls in with their suggestions. But for the prophecy that he shall be king, and the instigation of Lady Macbeth, he might not have committed the crime. Their prophecy that Banquo's children shall be kings, breeds in him, mistrust and fear of Banquo, not to be removed except by Banquo's murder. After he murders Banquo, he yields his soul to the witches. The witches lead him on the doom by creating in him over-confidence, or a false sense of security. His retribution comes through his blind faith in their power and prophecies. The witches win "with honest trifles," and betray him "in deepest consequences."

S.A. Brooke writes, "The witches are much more than creatures who have power over nature. They have influence also on the soul, but only on the soul that has admitted evil to dwell in it. When the soil is tainted the poisonous seeds take root. When a man had already sheltered a temptation, they come to him charged with fresh temptation, and hurry the already cherished evil into outward execution of it. They master the thoughts of Macbeth because they are in tune with them. They have no influence on Banquo, who is innocent of wrong. Then, again, they hand on their power of doubling evil soul through Macbeth's letter to Lady Macbeth. The murder they have half-suggested to Macbeth jumps with the murder in her heart. She feels the wicked influence of the Weird Sisters, though she has never seen them." Thus through Macbeth and Lady Macbeth the witches influence the action of the play.

Next the witches may be compared with other supernatural beings in Shakespeare's plays. Shakespeare introduces faires in his A *'Midsummer Night's Dream*—the fairy king Oberon, the fairy queen Titania and the mischievous Puck. These fairies are innocent beings : they play innocent tricks upon human lovers, and even upon their own queen. Instead of tempting human beings to evil they are sometimes benevolent, and do good to them. The fairies have much to do with the action of the play, but they do no evil—on the other hand they effect a reconciliation between lovers, between parent and child. In *The Tempest* : there is Ariel who has much to do with the shaping of the plot ; but Ariel is purely an elemental being, free from all human passions and desires except a longing for freedom, which is the very breath of his being. Ariel is absolutely subject to Prospero's will ; he has power over the elements like the witches, but this power is exercised not independently, but under the direction of Prospero's will. In *Macbeth*, the human will is absolutely subject to the gesture of the witches. In Macbeth the supernatural is a secret power veiled behind the visible actions of history, a power unconquerable by man's

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S. A. Brooke notes the important difference. "These supernatural creatures, as he conceived them, had chiefly to do with nature, were either embodiments of its elemental forces, or their masters." Such were Oberon and Ariel but they had most to do with the beneficences. Here the Weird Sisters command their evil forces.

Q. 23. Is Lady Macbeth fiend-like ?

Ans. Malcolm calls Lady Macbeth "fiend-like." It is true that Lady Macbeth instigates the murder of the king, and knowing the soft nature of her husband, might have undertaken the deed herself, but was deterred by the facial resemblance of Duncan to her father. She partly unsexes herself, despising "the milk of human kindness." If we seriously consider her address to the evil spirits, we may feel inclined to think her "fiend-like" too :

"Come, you spirits
That tend on mortal thoughts ! unsex me here.
And fill me from the crown to the toe, top-full
Of direst cruelty ! make thick my blood,
Stop up the access and passage to remorse,
That no compunctious visitings of nature,
Shake my fell purpose, nor keep peace between,
The effect and it ! Come to my woman's breasts,
And take my milk for gall, you murdering ministers,
Wherever in your sightless substances,
You wait on nature's mischief ! Come, thick night,
And pall thee in the dunnest smoke of hell,
That my knee knife see not the wound it makes
Nor heaven peep through the blanket of the dark,
To cry 'Hold, hold !"

But there are other features which ought to be noted. First Lady Macbeth unsexes herself. But is she successful ? She cannot kill the woman in her. She shows extraordinary power of will and nerve in the beginning, but it is all done to brace up her husband. But she never ceased to be woman. She represses her emotion and imagination for a long time, but nature at length has her revenge upon her. Her sleep-walking in which she re-enacts all the scenes of horror she has gone through, vindicates her womanliness. Lady Macbeth is not fiend-like. She overplays her part, and pays the penalty. If she could have made herself callous, reckless and flint-hearted, she would have been spared the nightmare terrors, and she would have lived to see her husband's downfall and destruction.

Q. 24. 'Yet do I fear thy nature.' Explain and comment on Lady Macbeth's conception of the character of her husband.

How far is her estimate justified by subsequent events in the play ? [*C. U., 1917.*]

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Ans. Macbeth writes a letter to his wife on the very day of his victory, telling her of his meeting with witches and of the partial fulfilment of their prophecies. If his letter proves anything, it is that Macbeth shares with his wife his hopes and aspirations. On reading the letter Lady Macbeth at once makes up her mind on what is to be done. "Glamis thou art and Cawdor, and shalt be what thou art promised"—these words of Lady Macbeth express a purpose which she pursues to its bitter end. But none is better aware of the nature of Macbeth than Lady Macbeth. She fully knows his weakness, and is afraid that his weakness of will might be a bar to the attainment of his ambition. His nature "is too full of the milk of human kindness." Lady Macbeth is little troubled by any nice scruples, and can, therefore, little appreciate her husband's vacillation. The fact is that Macbeth is deterred from the act of crime by his delicate sensibilities, and by his shaping imagination.

Her husband has a desire to be great, and he is not without ambition ; but what she cannot understand is that he will not take the readiest means to the fulfilment of his ambition. Lady Macbeth draws a very subtle distinction. Macbeth has no objection to unfair means as such, but he will rather not face the risk of it. Lady Macbeth rightly says : "Wouldst not play false" and "yet wouldst wrongly win.' Here Lady Macbeth touches the very essence of Macbeth's character. Macbeth does not mind winning the crown by unfair means, yet he will not play false. The murder of the king—for it comes to that—does not so much rouse in him a strong moral repugnance to that as an imaginative horror of blood. Except from his personal shrinking from the deed of blood, he will not wish it left undone. Lady Macbeth puts it very sucinctly : "That which rather thou dost fear to do than wishest should be undone."

The character of Macbeth may then be, thus, summed up. Macbeth has ambition, but he is not prepared to take the readiest means of achieving it, not because he has any strong objection to unfair means as such, but because he is not willing to face the risk.

Lady Macbeth's estimate of her husband's character is very fairly correct. An analysis of Macbeth's soliloquy in Act I, sc. vii, shows that in the matter of murdering Duncan, moral consideration weighs little with him, that he is more concerned with the personal risk to himself, than with the consequences of his own act. "If it were done, when, tis done, then't were well it were done quickly—" in these words we have the most searching self-revelation ; and substantially there is little difference between it and Lady Macbeth's estimate of her husband's character.

But Lady Macbeth misses one point in his character—namely, Macbeth's imagination, which easily catches fire, coupled with his delicate and over-refined sensibilities. In consequence of this,

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Lady Macbeth cannot foresee the reaction—the total revulsion of feeling that follows that commission of the crime, and also the retribution which is wrought chiefly through Macbeth's imagination.

Macbeth breaks down physically and mentally immediately after the murder. He seems to hear a voice cry : "Sleep no more ! Macbeth does murder sleep." The slightest noise startles him. When he hears the knocking he is so much upset that he does not know what to do. He shudders at the spots of blood sticking to his hand.

> "How is't with me, when every noise appals me ?
> What hands are here ! ha ! they pluck out mine eyes.
> Will all great Neptune's ocean wash this blood
> Clean from my hand ? No, this my hand will rather
> The multitudinous seas incarnardine,
> Making the green one red."

Subsequently Macbeth recovers its balance of mind. At least in the scene of the discovery of the murder, Macbeth seems to have the coolest nerve of all. But he seems to have been never haunted by the vision of blood, and after he becomes king, however he may face it out, he has suffered in secret, his sleep being disturbed by nightmares. In fact Macbeth has never been able to suppress his imagination, which has been an instrument of torture to him. So the ghost of Banquo startles him at the Banquet Scene. He seems to see the ghost shake his "gory looks" at him. Lady Macbeth, in her impatience, exclaims :

> "O proper stuff !
> This is the very painting of your fear.
> this is the air-drawn dagger which, you said,
> Led you to Duncan. O ! these flaws and starts,
> Impostors to true fear, would well become
> A woman's story at a winter's fire,
> Authorized by her grandam."

Q. 25. Summarise the estimate of her husband's character given by Lady Macbeth on reading his letter. How far is the estimate justified by his conduct in the course of the play ?
[*C. U., 1919.*]

Ans. See Answer to Question 24.

Q. 26. "If it were done when "tis done." Give the substance of the speech which thus begins. What light does the speech throw on the characters of the speaker ? [*C. U., 1917*]

Ans. Macbeth is prepared to do the murder of the king, if, as soon as the murder is done, there is an end of the matter. If, it brought in its train no evil and, the king gone, his ambition would be easily fulfilled so that this stroke would finally settle the

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affair in this life, Macbeth would gladly risk the life to come. But he is aware that in these cases retribution generally follows even in this life, that a person who sets such an example, may in his turn be the victim of it. Nemesis holds the cup of poison to the lips of one who prepares it for one's foe.

Secondly, he cannot help thinking that he has twofold obligation to Duncan, first as his kinsman and subject, and secondly as his host. As a host he should protect him from his murderer; far less can he be his murderer. He cannot also forget that Duncan has been a wise, just and benevolent ruler, and that his virtues will appear as witnesses against his murder, and appeal to the sympathy of all. Macbeth can discover nothing that would urge him to this crime except his inordinate ambition.

As we see here, Macbeth has no serious objection to the crime itself, but he is mortally afraid of the consequences. He was even prepared to risk the life to come, if he could have no trouble in this world for murdering the king. It is not without some qualms of conscience that he considers his twofold obligation to the king, but these scruples are momentary and weigh far less with him than his fear of the consequences. It should also be noted that while Lady Macbeth is more immediately concerned with the present ; Macbeth looks forward to the future, and loses himself in speculation. What his soliloquy shows is that Macbeth is little concerned with moral issues. He has a very active imagination which begins to call up shapes of terror to him, and which finally works his retribution.

Q. 27. State the 'compunctious visitings of nature' which make Macbeth shrink from murdering the king.

[*C. U., 1927.*]

Ans. See Answer to Question 30.

Q. 28. Give the substance of the dialogue between Banquo and Macbeth on the night of Duncan's murder.

Ans. It is a little more than twelve at night, and the feast is over. Banquo is proceeding to his bed-chamber, accompanied by his son, Fleance, who bears a torch. He has been sleepy for some time, but he has a dread of the cursed thoughts, which become uppermost in him in sleep, and has, therefore, kept awake so long. He soon finds that Macbeth has not yet retired. Banquo conveys to him the king's high gratification, and hands him the diamond which the king presents to Lady Macbeth. Macbeth apologises for the imperfect welcome that he has been able to accord to the king. Banquo turns the conversation upon the witches, of whom, he says, he dreamt last night. Macbeth tries to dismiss the subject airily ; yet he promises to speak of them at a time which Banquo will be able to spare as well as himself. Banquo

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gladly agrees to make such time. Then Macbeth adds that if Banquo will abide by his counsel, he may win honour. Whether Banquo understands his hint or not, he says that he is not certainly averse to honour, and is quite prepared to act on his counsel, provided he does not compromise either his honour or his loyalty to the king. Then they part.

Q. 29. Describe the 'dagger-scene'. What light does it throw on the character of Macbeth ?

Ans. Macbeth meets Banquo on his way to his bed-chamber a little after midnight. There is a brief talk between them. Then they part. Now Macbeth sends a servant to his wife to tell her to get the drink ready and to strike the bell when it is time. Suddenly there shoots up before his eyes the phantom of a dagger. As he tries to clutch at it, it moves away. He asks himself whether it is not a creation of his heat-oppressed brain. It points the way he is to go. He does not know whether he should doubt the evidence of his eyes, or of all his other senses. He begins to see even spots of blood on the phantom of dagger. His imagination, he feels, must have played this trick.

He is solemnly impressed by the silence of midnight when bad dreams afflict the sleeper, when witches celebrate the worship of Hecate and the graunt, spectre-like murderer stealthily moves towards his victim. Macbeth is afraid that his very foot-steps may awaken the stones and take away the awfulness of the hour. The bell strikes, and he hurries on towards the chamber of the King.

The dagger is the creation of Macbeth's imagination. But it may be noted that while Macbeth lets himself be run away with his imagination, he realises that it is a dagger of the mind, a false creation proceeding from the heat-oppressed brain. Nevertheless the phantom of dagger has a very unsettling effect upon him. The point is that his fervid imagination, though it does not paralyse his reason, does certainly dominate him more than his reason. This peturbation of his mind on the eve of the murder, as we see, is due to the activity of his imagination ; and we can easily conceive the revulsion of feeling which follows the murder ; that again has its source in his imagination.

Q. 30. State the reaction in Macbeth after he had murdered the King. Contrast him in this connection with Lady Macbeth.

Ans. Macbeth's imagination has been his curse. On the eve of the murder it calls up the phantom of dagger which points the way to the king's chamber. Though Macbeth knows it to be the creation of his heat-oppressed brain, he cannot lightly dismiss it from his thoughts. The act of murdering the king must have been a desperate fear for him. He hurries back from the scene, very much

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excited and distracted. If very little morally troubled, he has been very much horrified by the blood he has shed ; and all that follows is invested with a poignant meaning.

On his way back from the King's bed-chamber, he comes upon Malcolm and Donalbain, who slept in the next room. They seem to have suddenly waked up from their sleep, and after praying for the blessing of God, concluded by '*Amen*,' laid themselves down to sleep, again. Macbeth felt that he could not repeat '*Amen*' after them, though he had the greatest need of God's blessing. From this it is clear what a revulsion of feeling the crime has produced in Macbeth. Then again he seems to have heard a voice cry, "Sleep no more ! Macbeth does murder sleep," a cry that was echoed and re-echoed from every corner of the palace, a cry that kept ringing in his ear. It is all but the work of his fervid imagination and delicate sensibilities which have been deeply shaken and outraged by the crime he had committed. He gazes on blood on his hands, and the sight drives him to a frenzied agony.

What a contrast is Lady Macbeth's self-composure to Macbeth's excitement and terror ! She might have herself murdered the King, if he did not resemble her father while he slept. The sight of blood does not disquiet her. "A little of water washes it off and there is the end of the matter." The fact is that Lady Macbeth is little troubled by the imagination, which if she possesses, she knows how to repress. So she is able to take such a realistic view of the whole matter. She admonishes her husband, 'your noble strength to think so brain-sickly of things.' She carries back the daggers which Macbeth has brought with him in his excitement and when she returns, she waves her bloody hands before him and says. "A little water clears us of this deed." Lady Macbeth, with her supreme self-mastery, makes light of the whole affairs. But we wonder how far she can go in her-repression.

Q. 31. Discuss the genuineness of the Porter-scene in *Macbeth*. (*C.U., 1917.*)

Ans. Among those who object to the Porter-scene, Coleridge is one. He remarks, "This low soliloquy of the porter and his few speeches afterwards I believe to have been written for the mob by some other hands perhaps with Shakespeare's consent ; and that finding it fake, he, with the remaining ink of a pen otherwise employed, just interpolated the words :

I'll devil-porter it no further : I had thought to have let in some of all professions, that go the primrose way to the everlasting bonfire.'

"Of the rest not a syllable has the ever-present being of Shakespeare."

Coleridge makes a partial confession that Shakespeare has something to do with the scene. We see no reason why Shakes-

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peare is not responsible for the whole of the scene. First, this scene is introduced as a relief to the tragic tension of the previous scene. It is one of the fundamental laws of dramatic art that relief should be provided, and Shakespeare obeys it not only in this play, but also elsewhere. Secondly, the scene brings us back to the normal life with the dawn of the day, as contrasted with horror enacted in the darkness of night. Thirdly, it emphasises the irony of the situation in that Macbeth's castle is hell, so significantly suggested by the devil-porter. Then certain phrases in the scene have the true Shakespearean ring, already attested by Coleridge ; the use of 'old', in 'he should have old turning the key, the phrases 'devil-porter it,' 'the primrose way to the everlasting bonfire', the cenception of an internal porter, the manner of the dialogue with Macduff are all Shakespearean. Hales defends the scene on the following grounds :

(1) That it is an integral part of the play, connected as it is so with the knocking in the previous scene.

(2) That it is necessary as a relief to the surrounding horror, relaxing the tragic tension of the previous scene.

(3) That it is necessary according to the law of contrast elsewhere obeyed—this co-mingling of comic and tragic being a feature of the Romantic Drama.

(4) That its style and language are Shakespearean.

Q. 32. Give the substance of the conversation between Macbeth and Lady Macbeth, with which the banquet closes. What light does it throw on the character of either ?

Ans. Macbeth has been very much upset by the visitation of Banquo's ghost. He connects it with the desire of revenge, for which the ghost cannot lie quietly in the grave—'blood will have blood.' He further expresses of Lady Macbeth his fear that the most secret murder is sometimes disclosed by the most strange means—by the rolling away of stones, and the voice of trees, and sometimes by the flight of birds such as magpies, jackdaws and rooks.

Macbeth then asks his wife what she thinks of Macduff's non-attendance at the banquet. Before giving her opinion she asks whether he had sent any messenger to him. He promises to send one, and watch all his movements through the spy whom he has installed in his house. He cannot set his mind at ease until he has seen the witches again and known the worst that is in store for him. Next morning he proposes to set forth to the witches. He declares that it is now too late to retrace his steps after having proceeded so far on a bloody career. He has been harbouring strange projects in his mind, all waiting to be executed without delay. Lady Macbeth perceives that he is getting more and more excited, and presses him to go to sleep. Macbeth assents. He confesses that the way in which he has let himself be deluded, for

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example, in the case of Banquo's ghost, is the result of fear, such as is felt by a beginner in crime, but he hopes that use will harden him.

As we see from this conversation, the reaction of crime has begun in Lady Macbeth as in Macbeth. But while Lady Macbeth suppresses all signs of it, Macbeth almost breaks down under it. Crime has bred in Macbeth fear and mistrust. He might have hoped that, Banquo killed, he would have peace of mind again. Banquo is murdered but his son, Fleance, escapes ; so here is fresh trouble for him. A cause of graver anxiety is supplied by Macduff's non-attendance at the banquet. It is evident that Macduff will be the next victim of his fear and mistrust. The fact is that Macbeth is growing desperate day by day. "For my own good all causes shall give way"—that exactly sums up his position now. After he is gone so far in crime he can no more retrace his steps.

Q. 33. Describe the scene in which Macduff is informed of the death of his wife and children. [*C. U., 1927.*]

Ans. Ross hesitates more than once before he breaks the news of this brutal murder of Macduff's wife and children. The grief, when Macduff hears of it, stuns and crushes him. He simply pulls his hat down over his brows, but gives no expression to his feelings. How it pains him to think that he had been away while his wife and children were murdered ! He cannot forgive himself for this. Malcolm seeks to comfort him in vain. All his pretty ones gone ! All his pretty chickens at once fell swoop ! He curses himself that he had been away from them, for he thinks that it was his fault that they had been murdered. He soon brings his grief under control. Refusing to make any parade of it he only wishes that he could meet Macbeth, and that without no further delay, and if he lets him escape, may heaven forgive him too !

The murder of Macduff's wife and children furnishes an additional incentive to revenge, and thus precipitates the doom of Macbeth. It shows that "Macbeth is ripe for shaking, and the powers above put on their instruments."

Q. 34. Macduff is "the agent not only of the grand nemesis which constitutes the whole plot, but also of a nemesis upon a private wrong which occupies the latter half of the play."—Discuss.

Ans. From the beginning Macduff does not accept the order of things, established by Macbeth. He retains his loyalty to the old throne. He does not attend Macbeth's coronation at Scone ; he does not attend the royal banquet. No wonder then that he would draw a large share of Macbeth's attention. He openly breaks with Macbeth by turning away his messenger with a flat refusal to obey his summons. But before Macbeth can get him into his power, he runs away to England. He goes there with a motive. He wants Malcolm, who is then living at the English Court, to come into his own, if possible, with the help of the King of England.

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Macduff gets to England at a time when the reaction has already begun in Scotland. Malcolm has been contemplating an invasion of Scotland with the troops, lent by the King of England. Macduff's visit expediates action. A fresh incentive is added to the cause in the private revenge of Macduff for the murder of his wife and children. Macduff is not only, therefore, instrumental in bringing about the retribution of Macbeth. But urged by his private wrongs, he becomes the very executor of this retribution :

"But, gentle heavens,
Cut short all intermission ; front to front,
Bring thou this fiend of Scotland and myself ;
Within my sword's length set him. If he 'scape,
Heaven forgive him too !"

This prayer of Macduff is fulfilled.

Q. 35. Give a short account of the sleep-walking scene, mentioning the previous incidents in the play to which Lady Macbeth refers. [*C. U., 1918.*]

Ans. A doctor has kept watch for two nights with a waiting-gentlewoman, that he may observe the fit of Lady Macbeth. The gentlewoman witnesses that she has seen her mistress rise from her bed, throw the dressing-gown upon her, unlock her closet, take out her paper, write something on it, read it, and seal it, and at last return to bed. All these details are supplied by the gentlewoman to the doctor, but she is not prepared to communicate to him all that her mistress had said in sleep-walking. Suddenly Lady Macbeth enters at this moment with a taper. They stand aside to observe her. She keeps rubbing her hands and cries : "Out damned spot ! out, I say !' She seems to admonish her husband, and allude to a particular old man (*i e.*, Duncan) who has too much blood in him. She suddenly recalls that the Thane of Fife had a wife ; again looks at her hands which she imagines to be blood-stain ; wonders whether all the perfumes of Arabia will not sweeten them. With these dismal reflections she intermingles admonitions to her husband, sometimes bidding him wash his hands, put on his gown, and sometimes asking him not to worry about Banquo, and sometimes urging him to go to bed. Then she retires. The doctor declares that this disease is not one to be cured by him. He advises the gentlewoman to keep a sharp watch upon her and permit within her reach nothing with which she may do violence to herself.

In the sleep-walking scene, Lady Macbeth recalls the past incidents—particularly the murder of Duncan in connection with which she was so anxious that her husband should wash his hands and worry no more about the murder. Sometimes she would mix up with it her memory of the banquet scene. Here is the example :

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"Wash your hands, put on your night-gown ; look not so pale. I tell you yet again ; Banquo's buried ; he cannot come out on's grave.

Though she had nothing to do with the murder of Macduff's wife and children, yet the incident crops in her nightmare :

"The Thane of Fife had a wife : where is she now ?"

She looks at her hands and fancies ; she sees blood on them and cries in vain—"Out, damned spot ! out, I say !' She seems to be obsessed with it, and with her anxiety for her husband. The scene of Duncan's murder, Macbeth's unnervement at Banquo's apparition, the fear and anxiety at the knocking after the murder of Duncan—all these come thronging back to her mind and she reenacts them to her sleep-walking.

Q. 36. Tomorrow, and tomorrow, and tomorrow.—Give the substance of Macbeth's soliloquy which begins thus. What light does it throw on the character of the speaker ? [*C. U., 1917.*]

Ans. This speech is occasioned by the death of Lady Macbeth. The only comment that Macbeth makes with regard to Lady Macbeth's death is that she should have died hereafter. The rest of the speech is concerned with his reflections on life. It is the nature of men to look forward to the day to come, and this day does come, and then merges into the past. Thus every to-morrow becomes a yesterday ; so life moves on from day to day until the end of the allotted term is reached. All the days that have been lived over only show the way to the annihilation of death, have only brought men nearer to death. Macbeth now wishes that he could have done with his life ! Life seems to be a mere shadow moving about. He compares it to an inferior actor, who, for a while, treads pompously, on the stage, and blusters, and then is immediately forgotten by the audience. Life is a meaningless affair—something like the noisy speech of a raving man full of words and gestures.

This speech reflects Macbeth's sense of weariness of life. The death of Lady Macbeth in this crisis of his life leaves him alone and desolate, when he says, "She should have died hereafter." It is not an expression of apathy or indifference. When all his thanes are deserting him, when the enemy is knocking at his gate, his wife too is gone. However callous, he might have been rendered by his crimes, he must have heard of his wife's death with a poignant sense of loss. Life has now no more interest to him. The sooner he can get rid of it, the better. In this speech is the cry of sheer despondence, a scene of having drunk the cup of misery to the dregs, a realisation that life is a vanity of vanities. The reaction in Macbeth to crime and bloodshed has now come in full cycle.

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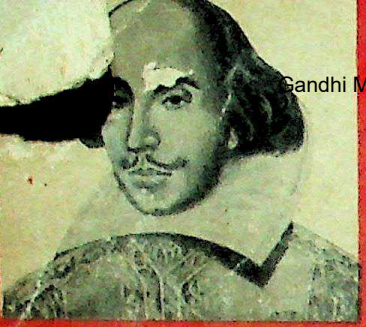

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